

Saturday 8 August 2015

Amateur Photographer



Nikon 80-400mm lens
Is this the dream lens for sports and wildlife shooters? Phil Hall finds out

Passionate about photography since 1884

Reach for the stars

The world's **best astronomy photos** and how they were made

Step by step

Explore the visual potential of staircases



The **10 commandments** of **action photography**

Top sports pros show **how to get great shots** of moving subjects

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When I look up at the night sky all I see is the moon in a sea of blackness. If I let my eyes adjust, I eventually see millions of white dots too. It

doesn't seem to offer much photographic potential, but then the annual Astronomy Photographer of the Year competition comes along to remind me just how wrong first impressions can be. Of all the big photo contests that occur throughout the calendar

this is one of my favourites, and it never fails to fill me with awe. Whether it's dramatic images of distant nebulae, or wideangle views of the Milky Way framed against a silhouetted earth, they remind me of the beauty of creation – and of our insignificance in the vastness of space. If you get the opportunity to see the winning images in the magnificent setting of the Royal Observatory Greenwich in September, I urge you to do so.

Nigel Atherton, Editor

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ONLINE PICTURE OF THE WEEK



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Fungi by Adrian Mills

Pentax K-5, 90mm, 1/15sec at f/2.8, ISO 100

'This image was taken in Limousin in Central France,' says Adrian. 'To take the photograph I lay on the ground, braving some ant bites. I was looking up at the little slope on which the fungi grew, while waiting for the low sun to diffuse. The image was taken with an old manual Tamron SP AF 90mm

macro, which I find well suited to fungi as it renders the rich earthy tones. Shooting into the sun can bring backgrounds to life that are otherwise quite messy. With nature shots I place equal (or greater) importance on a background as it sets the canvas and mood for the subject.'

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Email Email a selection of low-res images (up to 5MB of attachments in total) to appicturedesk@timeinc.com.

CD/DVD Send us a disc of high-resolution JPEG, TIFF or PSD images (at least 2480 pixels along its longest length), with a contact sheet, to the address on page 21.

Via our online communities Post your pictures into our Flickr group, Facebook page or the gallery on our website. See details above.

Transparencies/prints Well-packaged prints or slides (without glass mounts) should be sent by Special Delivery, with a return SAE, to the address on page 21.

NEWS ROUND-UP

The week in brief, edited by Chris Cheesman

McCullin honour

Acclaimed war photographer Don McCullin, who left school in his teens, said he is 'thrilled' after being awarded an honorary doctorate by Bath Spa University in recognition of his outstanding contribution to journalism. Vice Chancellor Professor Christina Slade said honorary doctorates are awarded to people 'whose achievements are an inspiration to our graduating students'.



© MILE 91/8EN LAMDON

Pixma primed



Canon has announced a new inkjet printer, the Canon Pixma MG3650, which supports direct printing from websites such as Facebook, Instagram and Flickr. The MG3650 also offers scanning and copying functions, and boasts a built-in access-point mode that enables 'wireless printing without an internet connection'. It is due out in September, priced £69.99.

Sigma 24-35mm price

Sigma has announced the pricing and availability of its Sigma 24-35mm f/2 DG HSM | A lens, touted as the world's first fixed maximum aperture full-frame zoom. The lens costs £949.99 and is available in a Sigma and Canon mount, with the Nikon mount to be announced at a later date.



© CHRIS GRANT/GETTY IMAGES

Video slider

The Hague Camslide Micro Go is touted as the ultimate camera slider for GoPro, small DSLRs and lightweight video cameras. The 50cm rail and compact carriage system are designed to help videographers achieve great tracking shots from cameras weighing up to 800g, and costs £48. For details visit www.cameragrip.com.

Manfrotto Off Road

Manfrotto has released a 20L version of its Off Road Hiker backpack. Designed to carry a mid-sized DSLR with a lens and accessories, it also offers side access to the camera. The backpack also features a 'breathable' back system, which aims to keep it away from the photographer's body. The Manfrotto Off Road 20L Hiker backpack costs £129.95. For details visit www.manfrotto.co.uk.



WEEKEND PROJECT

Pinterest mood board

Most photographers have a head full of ideas for specific images they'd like to take in future. However, all these ideas can be overwhelming, and need some organising in order to create a clear vision of what to shoot. It's not uncommon for photographers, or any kind of visual artists, to create mood boards to help achieve their vision. Pinterest (www.pinterest.com) is one of the best tools to help you gather inspiring photographs into a collection, using either its browser-based platform or the app for Android or iOS smartphones. You can search for images other photographers have taken, or add images you find online to your virtual 'pin board'. This is useful for any type of photography, whether it's replicating a style, achieving a specific technique or gaining a certain mood in post-production.

1 First, create an account. It's easy to do, as you can sign in with your email and simply create a username and password. Alternatively, you can use your Google+, Facebook or Twitter accounts to register automatically.

2 Once you've set up a Pinterest account, you can start creating your own board or even multiple boards. To help you get acquainted with how it works, we suggest starting out with one basic board.



BIG picture

Exciting scenes from this year's Nascar in Daytona Beach, Florida, USA

◀ This week's image showcases Chris Graythen's thrilling shot taken at last month's Nascar 2015 motor races in Florida, USA. Here we see Brian Scott, driver of the #2 Shore Lodge Chevrolet, leading a pack of cars during the Nascar XFINITY Series Subway Firecracker 250 at the Daytona International Speedway. The event took place in Daytona Beach and is one of the world's leading auto-racing sporting events. Chris's image is a great demonstration of how utilising a slow shutter speed and panning with the action can enhance a shot to give a sense of the action. If you'd like some more tips on sports photography, see pages 11-19 of this issue where we have rounded up 10 tips for shooting action and sporting events.

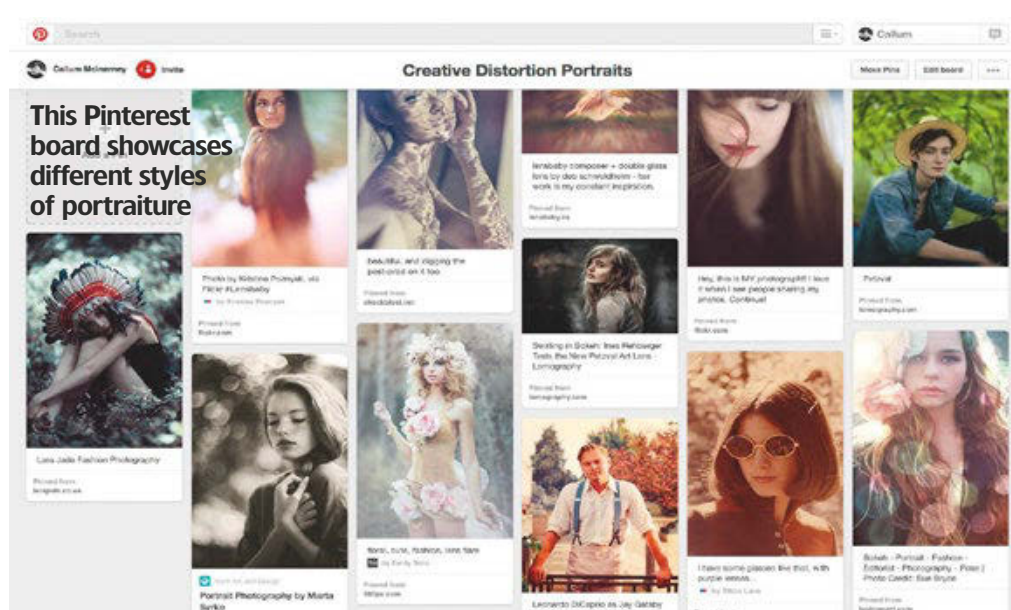
Words & numbers

Photographs open doors into the past, but they also allow a look into the future

Sally Mann
American photographer
b1951

3 Using the search bar, type in keywords to explore images that other users have pinned. Alternatively, upload your own images or add something you've found online, and would like to remember, to your board.

4 If you'd like to keep your posts private, it's possible to create a secret board that only you, and anybody you choose to share it with, can see. This is particularly useful if you're collaborating with another person.



50,000

The number of photos Canadian photographer Jacques Nadeau fears he lost from a 35-year career after thieves stole his hard drives

Blind photographer lands dream role at football club



Dave uses a Canon EOS 6D with a 70-200mm f/2.8 lens and 2x converter

A MAN who is registered blind has landed his dream role as an official photographer at Portsmouth Football Club.

Dave Taylor (above), who has 25% vision in each eye, was devastated after he was forced to give up his job in the security industry in 2013, following his almost total sight loss.

'I didn't pick up a camera for three or four months,' the 51-year-old told AP.

However, photography – and help from the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) – lifted him out of the depression that followed, and helped him regain his confidence.

A passionate photographer since school days, Dave said he has no formal training – instead, learning his craft from reading magazines such as AP and watching YouTube videos to help hone his technique.

As a huge fan of 'Pompey', and determined to photograph a home game, Dave wrote to Portsmouth FC despite previously having shot only portraits and landscapes.

'I was surprised they responded because they [already] have their own photographer,' said Dave.

'I sent them a couple of landscape shots to show them what I could do.'

In March, Dave's dream became a reality when he was shadowed during a match by a club photographer who liked his photos so much he asked Dave to also cover reserve, ladies and academy teams' games.

He now works as a volunteer photographer for www.pompeypress.co.uk, a website for Portsmouth fans, covering the occasional first-team game as well as other matches.

'I can't always see the ball, so I rely a lot on my hearing of the ball being kicked and the crowd's cheers,' explained Dave, who mainly uses a Canon EOS 6D with a 70-200mm



Dave follows the action by listening to the reaction of the crowd

f/2.8 lens and 2x converter.

None of his kit has been adapted to cope with his visual impairment.

'I can hear the crowd, so if Portsmouth are attacking towards the Fratton End I know it.'

Using sound as a guide, Dave is able to zoom in on the action.

This technique doesn't always work, though. Dave recalls an amusing moment when he was waiting for the ball to land, only to find – after a long wait – that it wasn't a ball, but a passing gull.

He says he has a 'hit rate' of 10% – from 1,000 photos he takes per match, 100 are 'OK'.

Finding it difficult to judge the quality of his shots from the camera's LCD screen, Dave only edits once they're downloaded to his computer.

He sends 40-60 photos from each game to the team's website.

Dave added: 'When I found myself at pitch side, taking photographs at the club I've supported all my life, I felt like a kid in a toy shop – it was so exciting. It's great that Portsmouth was willing to look beyond my sight loss and see that I can actually take decent pictures.'

'I'm looking forward to maybe becoming a more regular photographer for the first team.'

Colin Farmery, who manages the club's inclusion and diversity policy, said: 'When Dave approached us, it was such an inspirational story we were delighted to give him a chance.'

'He has proved a valuable member of our Pompey Press volunteer team and his pictures are very good.'



Panasonic says a firmware update will be available for the new Lumix DMC-GX8

Panasonic working on Post Focus

PANASONIC is developing Post Focus technology, allowing photographers to choose parts of an image they want in focus with 'one-touch'.

Designed to prevent 'out-of-focus misshots', the technology combines Panasonic's Depth From Defocus AF technology with 4K video, shifting the lens to focus on as many as 50 different areas.

'While reviewing the images, the photographer simply touches the area where they want to set focus and, no matter where the original focus area was, a new image with the newly selected focus area will be produced as a separate photo,' says Panasonic.

Post Focus technology will be available via a firmware update for the Lumix DMC-GX8 and DMC-FZ300 later this year or in early 2016.



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© MARC MOL

Aerial photo wins wildlife award

A SWISS photographer has swept to victory in an international wildlife photography competition with an image of a herd of elephants captured from a microlight aircraft.

Marc Mol beat hundreds of entries to win the wildlife photography contest staged by the Society of International Nature and Wildlife Photographers (SINWP).

Commenting on his winning shot (see above), Marc said: 'What a nice and welcome surprise. A herd of elephants cast

incredible shadows across the dry Luangwa River floodplain as they journey to the refreshing waters of this dwindling river.'

Marc, from Laufen, took the extraordinary photograph from a microlight aircraft in the early morning light, while crossing a floodplain in the South Luangwa National Park, Zambia.

He used a Nikon D3S with an AF-S Nikkor 70-200 f/2.8 ED VR II lens, shooting at a focal length of 70mm.

The photographer added: 'The looming

shadows of the herd, led by the matriarch, are clearer than the animals themselves, who seamlessly blend in with the textured patterns of the sand below them.'

SINWP CEO Phil Jones said: 'The quality of entries for this month's competition was magnificent, with images ranging from macro shots to hippos bathing in their natural environment.'

'Marc's image captured the beauty of nature and was a worthy winner.'

Marc won a year's SINWP membership.

'Soap-bubble' bokeh lens set for comeback

THE 'LEGENDARY' Meyer-Optik-Görlitz Trioplan lens looks set to return after \$360,000 was raised on the crowdfunding website Kickstarter.

The redesigned 100mm f/2.8 lens is due to go on sale in December, 99 years after its first appearance.

The Trioplan 100mm f/2.8 lens is aimed at nature, portrait and macro photographers.

It will be available in Canon and Nikon DSLR mounts, and will also be compatible with Fujifilm X, Sony NEX and Micro Four Thirds-mount CSCs.

The German-made



lens is also expected to be out in Leica M and Pentax K versions.

Dr Stefan Immes, who is behind the launch, said: 'First tests are showing that we have managed to keep the extraordinary charm of the lens.'

Developers say the soap-bubble effect appears 'due to a spherical undercorrection of the lens at f/2.8'.

They add: 'Besides its wonderful bokeh, which appears in backlight situations, when it is used wide open at f/2.8 it achieves a balanced sharpness with a wonderful soft texture in out-of-focus areas.'

For the latest news visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

Get up & go

The most interesting things to see, to do and to shoot this week. By Jon Stapley

LONDON



© SIMON NORFOLK, COURTESY MICHAEL HOPPEN GALLERY

Time Taken 6, Early Spring, 2013-2014

Simon Norfolk: Time Taken

Simon Norfolk's exhibition at the Michael Hoppen Gallery traces the history of the war-torn landscape of the Bamiyan Valley in Afghanistan. It's a meditative look at how the seasons change what's left of the area, following its destruction by the Taliban.

3 August-8 September, www.michaelhoppengallery.com

LAKE DISTRICT



© UTTAM KANANI

EPOY 2015

The winning images in this year's Atkins CIWEM Environmental Photographer of the Year competition head to Grizedale Forest for an exhibition in the visitor's centre beneath the canopy of trees.

Until 6 September, www.forestry.gov.uk/grizedale

LONDON



© PHILIP PINES

Egalitaria – Album

Album, a new photography gallery in London, celebrates its launch with a simple but interesting exhibition. Egalitaria comprises image entries from around the world, resulting in a unique collection.

Until 21 August, www.albumgallery.london

W MIDLANDS



© PETER MOSS

Frame Creatives: Project 15

Anyone who lives near the West Midlands group Frame Creatives has a chance to enter a competition to find the next generation of local photographers. Snap a portfolio inspired by either portraiture, environmental or street/reportage.

Until 11 September, www.framecreatives.com

Shrewsbury Flower Show

A huge range of entertainment and attractions await at Shrewsbury's two-day flower festival, with falconry, fireworks and show-jumping also on display, plus a photography competition.

14-15 August, www.shrewsburyflowershow.org.uk

SHROPSHIRE



© ANDY WESTLAKE



Viewpoint Jon Bentley

With the recent threat to Freedom of Panorama and the ability to take images in public spaces, copyright has been thrown into question. Should photographers give ground too?

Copyright has always been a quirky and inconsistent subject. Back when I worked as a producer on *Top Gear*, I often used to contemplate how strange it was that we could happily film and show cars designed by the world's most talented automotive designers without any restriction, but if a recent painting or piece of graphic art appeared in shot all sorts of potentially costly permissions had to be obtained.

Generally, my personal view on copyright is that, within reason, the fewer restrictions there are, the better it is for humankind. Getting permission from, say, Ford and its designers every time you wanted to show one of their cars would be a nightmare. And there'd be an impact on freedom of speech – a mischievous manufacturer could easily stop you filming its cars if it felt you were in danger of giving them negative reviews.

I was therefore horrified when I heard the recent story about the French MEP Jean-Marie Cavada, who was on a mission to prevent people publishing photos of buildings and sculptures without

their creators' consent. Whereas most European countries have a so-called Freedom of Panorama that entitles you to take and distribute pictures of things you see in public, France doesn't, meaning that (theoretically at least) you have to obtain permission when you want to show pictures of a building whose architect didn't die at least 70 years ago. Belgium and Italy take a similar view.

Cavada's plan was to extend the restriction to the whole of the EU in the name of harmonisation: I'd no longer be able to take a photo of, for example, The Shard and upload it to Flickr without first asking the permission of designer Renzo

'My personal view on copyright is that, within reason, the fewer restrictions the better'

Piano. Some even suggested that landscape shots containing any relatively recent buildings would need to have them blanked out for fear of infringing the architects' rights.

Thankfully, following a torrent of protests and petitions, Cavada's proposal was defeated in the European Parliament on 9 July, and the European Commission issued a statement to the effect that you should be allowed to photograph what you can see with your eyes as a European citizen, in public places and on the street.

But the scare got me wondering whether photographers should give ground too. At present in the UK, Freedom of Panorama doesn't apply to '2D graphic works' like those paintings I had to worry about on *Top Gear* or, indeed, photographs. But in countries like Austria, Spain, Germany and Sweden photographs are included. If you put your work in a public place I'm inclined to think people should have the right to take pictures of it.

Jon Bentley is a TV producer and presenter best known for *Top Gear* and Channel 5's *The Gadget Show*



Images of The Shard would have had to be blanked out so as not to infringe copyright

Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest? Send us your thoughts in around 500 words to the address on page 21 and win a year's digital subscription to AP, worth £79.99

New Books

The latest and best books from the world of photography. By Oliver Atwell



Bees: An Up-Close Look at Pollinators Around the World

by Sam Droege and Laurence Packer, Voyageur Press, £16.51, hardback, 160 pages, ISBN 978-0-76034-738-6

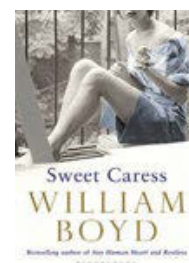


BEES are fascinating subjects in any field: literature, art, film (who can forget a wild-eyed Michael Caine at war with bees in 1978's nonsense-athon *The Swarm*?) and, of course, photography. The ecological necessity of bees within the natural world cannot be overstated, and as has been widely reported, colony collapse disorder threatens not just bees but also the wider environment.

With this in mind, it's perhaps our duty to enhance our understanding of these little creatures. In this book, Droege and Packer – two experts in their field – give you species to marvel at for hours (the orchid bee and long-nosed sandlover are especially incredible), and by the end of it you're likely to flip back a few pages to check you really did see what you think you did. It's humbling to realise you exist in a world of such incredible biological evolution. ★★★★★

Sweet Caress

William Boyd, Bloomsbury, £18.99, hardback, 464 pages, ISBN 978-1-63286-332-4



IT'S NOT often we feature novels in the AP review pages, but this new title from William Boyd more than qualifies. *Sweet Caress* follows a Lee Miller-esque character named Amory Clay who travels the world with her eye pressed to her camera's viewfinder. Cleverly, Boyd takes us on a tour of

the 20th century through Amory's eyes as she soaks up the world she finds beyond her small upbringing in London. It's as much a history lesson as it is a thrilling tale and, thanks to Boyd's absorbing prose, atmosphere almost bleeds from the page. There are not many contemporary male writers who'd have the confidence to write from a woman's point of view, but Boyd throws himself into the character and, as a result, we have an entirely believable narrator and protagonist. This is one for the beach. ★★★★★



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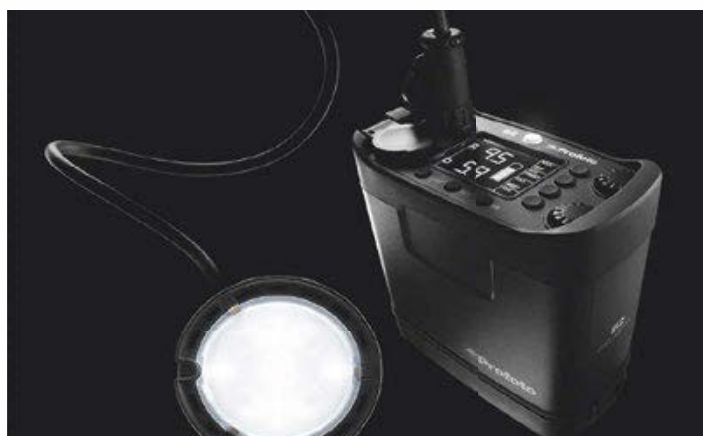
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10

commandments
of **sports**
photography

With a sport-filled summer on the go and the Rugby World Cup only weeks away, four top photographers share their expert tips on how to get breathtaking action shots ➤



Mark Pain

Mark is a multi-award-winning sports photographer and chief sports photographer of *The Mail on Sunday* who has more than 25-years' experience. He was named Sports Photographer of the Year in 2005 and 2011

at the British Press Awards, British Airways Olympic Photographer of The Year 2012 at the UK Guild of Picture Editors Awards, and in 2011 launched the UK's first dedicated Sports Photography School. He is also a Nikon ambassador. www.markpain.com

1 Technical preparation

Technical preparation is crucial in sports photography where most subjects are both fast moving and unpredictable. Even the most sophisticated cameras can easily be fooled by a subject's random changes of direction or tricky lighting situations. In fact, the more sophisticated cameras become, the trickier it is to be totally comfortable with all their clever (and sometimes not so clever!) settings and adjustments.

This is particularly true with your camera's AF, and it's crucial it is set up properly. This varies from sport to sport, but 99% of the time you should always select just one AF spot for the camera to focus on and be in continuous AF mode. This means you need to really concentrate on

following your subject as precisely as you can and always keep that AF spot on them. In the camera's AF sub-menus, you can also choose a number of spots around the single AF spot you've selected to assist the camera to successfully follow the subject – for instance, a group of nine central spots around the single spot in the middle. The camera will still try to focus on the single central spot chosen, but will also use the data from those around it. Never choose a setting where the camera decides which AF spots to use; it's simply too random and unreliable.

Any fluctuation of your subject away from the AF spot will result in the camera trying to focus on something else. This is where a secondary part of successful AF set-up comes in: focus tracking. When you change the speed of the AF tracking on the camera, you aren't changing how fast the camera can actually focus on your subject, you're either speeding up or slowing down the camera's 'brain' in deciding what it should focus on. By slowing down the tracking speed, the AF system will appear less jittery and will be more forgiving if your subject briefly moves off the single AF spot you've chosen. By varying the tracking speed from sport to sport, you'll massively assist the camera in doing what you want it to. The latest cameras are equipped with amazing features, but you have to be precise in telling them what you want. Get this right and your ability to keep your subject in focus will improve dramatically.

Set your camera up before you start shooting



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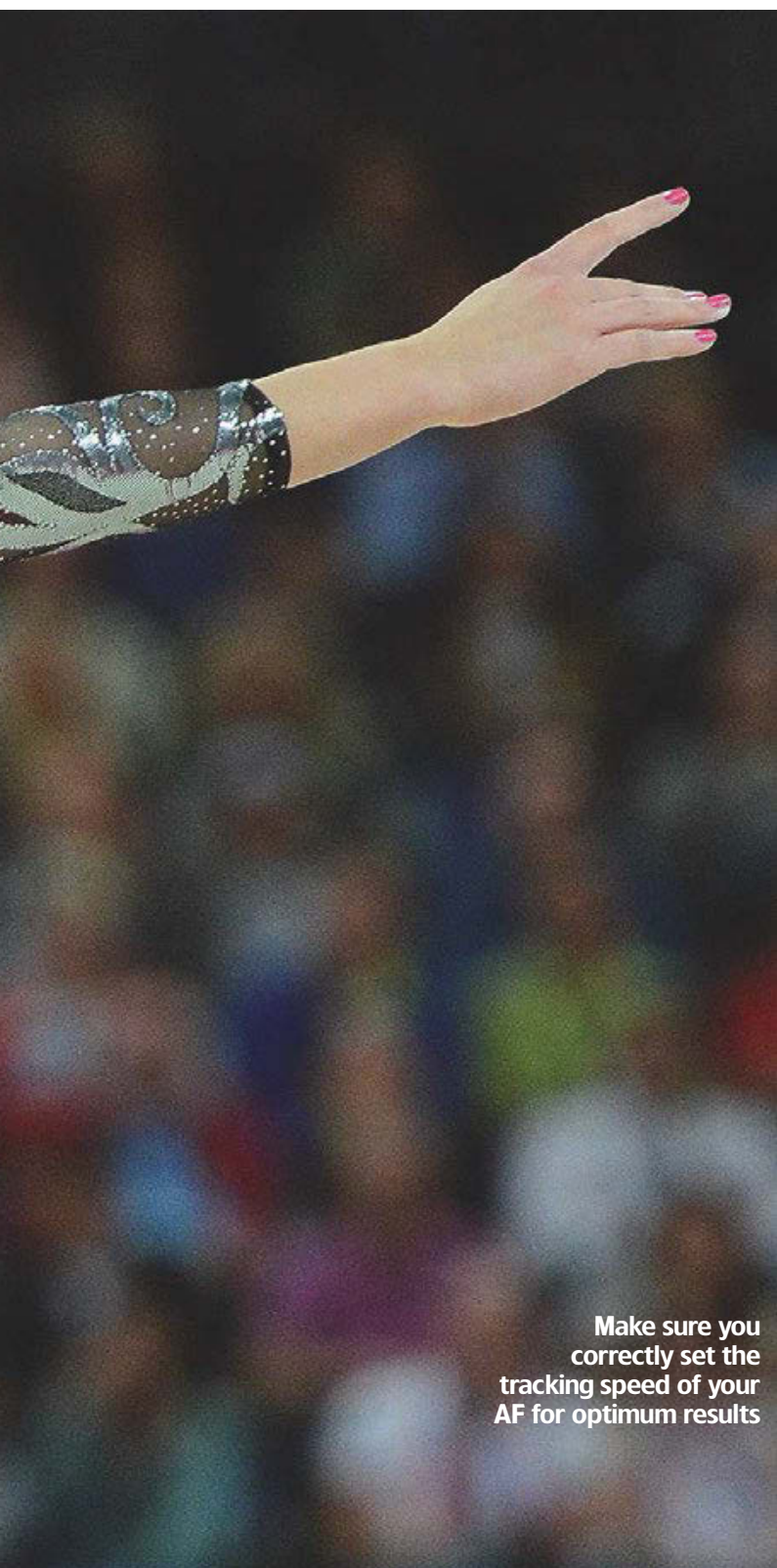




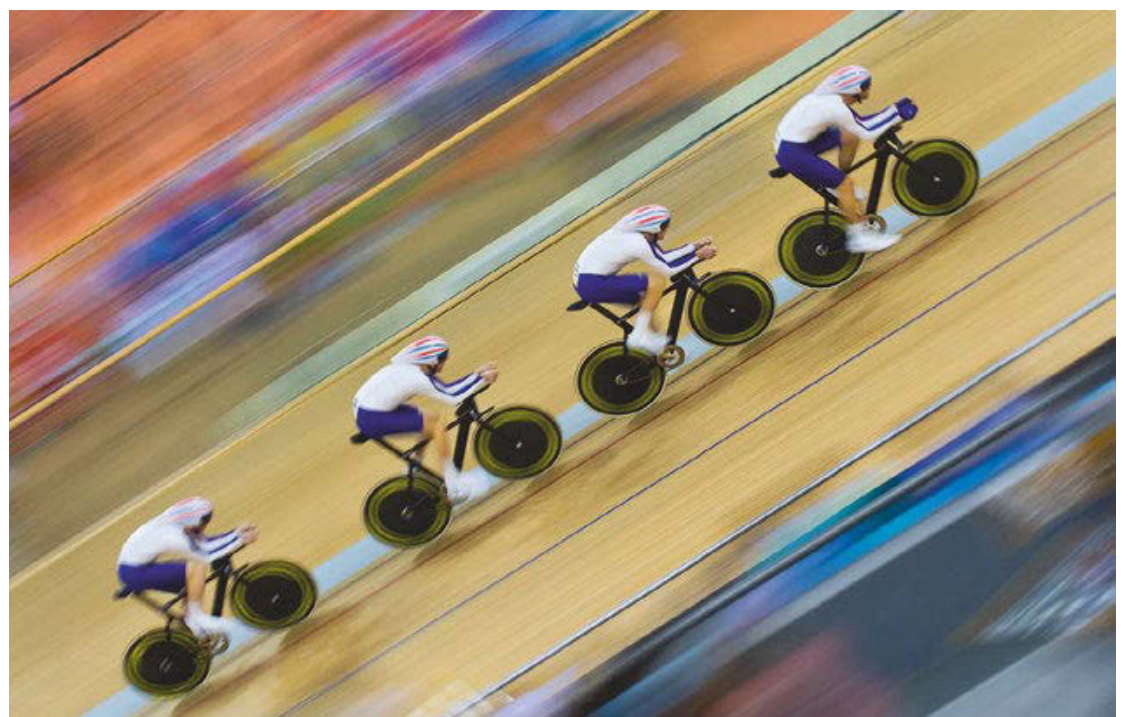
2 Back-button AF

Back-button AF is something you should start using on a permanent basis. Switching to back-button AF is when you completely transfer the autofocus of your camera from the top, front 'do-it-all' shutter button to one of the buttons on the back of your camera, normally one of the top-right back buttons. You actually deactivate the front button from focusing completely. In my opinion, this is a far more intuitive way of using autofocus. There isn't a single professional sports photographer I know who doesn't use back-button AF; it completely transforms your ability to follow focus your subject. As a bonus, with many cameras you can assign any of the buttons on the back of the camera to focus – whichever one suits your hands and shooting style best.

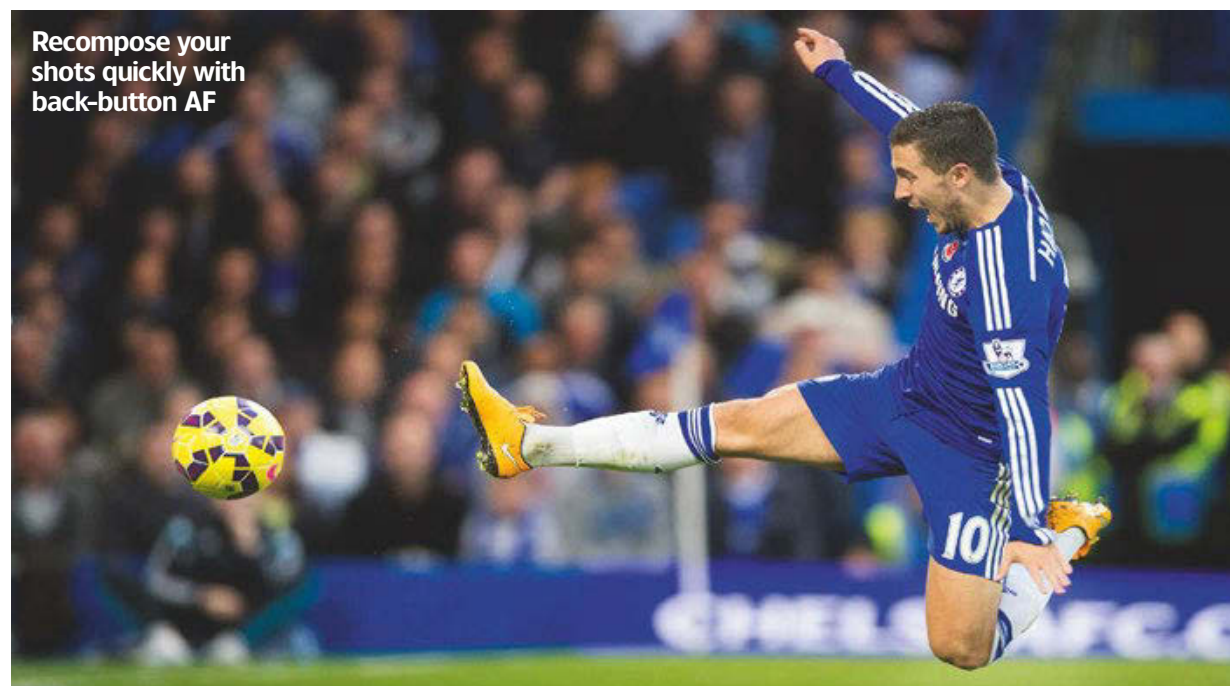
It's also great for your composition, as separating the two functions makes it easier to frame your subject exactly where you want it without compromise – and you'll never miss a moment as you try to recompose your camera. Even better, it's excellent for your 'photographic brain'. If you can mentally separate the AF of your camera from your composition, this will lead to achieving far better and more consistent composition in your images, especially when you have very little time to prepare and plan a picture. Switching to back-button AF will transform your photography, so try it!



Make sure you correctly set the tracking speed of your AF for optimum results



Using back-button focusing can really help with fast-moving panning shots



Recompose your shots quickly with back-button AF

ALL IMAGES ON THESE PAGES © MARC ASPLAND



A good sports image, like this one of KO'd boxer Ricky Hatton, tells a story



Marc Aspland

Marc is chief sports photographer of *The Times* and has covered numerous Olympic Games, FIFA World Cup finals, every FA Cup final since 1988 and each Wimbledon final from 1988 to 2013. He has shot many British Open golf championships, World Athletics events, Six Nations rugby, and every Rugby World Cup tournament since 1991. He is a past winner of Royal Photographer of the Year. www.marcaspland.com

3 The decisive moment

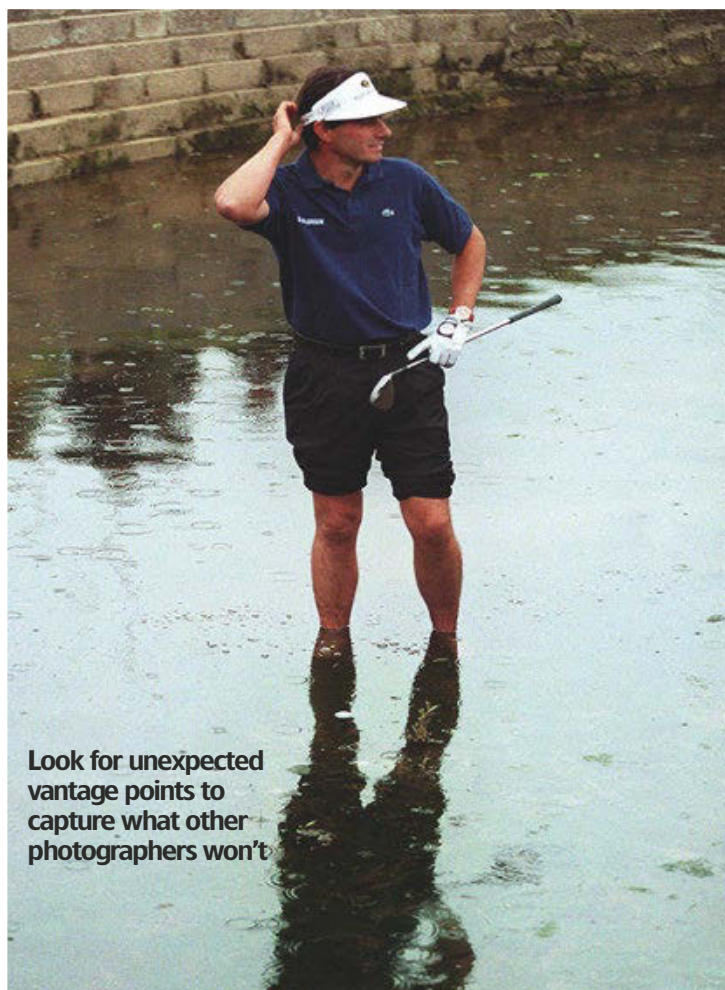
Henri Cartier-Bresson, the father of modern photojournalism, coined the phrase, 'the decisive moment', and in sports photography the iconic images that last the test of time are certainly decisive. Think of Maradona's, 'Hand of God' frame, Bob Beamon who soared into the record books at the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City with that long jump frame of 8.9 metres, or Tommie Smith and John Carlos giving the Black Power salute on the podium at the same Games. In my time it was Jonny Wilkinson's decisive drop goal, which won England the Rugby World Cup in Sydney, Australia, in 2003.

Then there are those sporting pictures that weren't all action, but which decisively summed up a sporting occasion. One of the most memorable, captured long after the 'decisive' knockout punch, is of Muhammad Ali as he reacts to his first round KO of Sonny Liston in 1965 taken by Neil Leifer. I've come to understand that I am not so much an 'all about the action' sort of photographer. My sports editor at *The Times* expects me to capture every decisive moment at every live event. But what he's come to appreciate is how I can take a single image that sums up those 90 minutes of football, 80 minutes of rugby and three days at Ryder Cup golf. I'd never dream of comparing a single frame I've taken to those of Cartier-Bresson or Leifer, but it's through my understanding of how they saw pictures – and how I try to capture images that tell a story – that he now views my photography.

My shot of Ricky Hatton after he was knocked out for the first time in his career by Floyd Mayweather in 2007 (above), is as close as I've come to Leifer's 1965 moment, but it tells the same story.

My close friend Jonny Wilkinson doesn't have a photo of his famous drop goal on his wall, but I'm pleased to say he does have a moment I captured long after the final whistle. It's of him and captain Martin Johnson in an emotional moment during the lap of honour (below right). It's up-close and personal, yet it sums up the momentous events these giants of the game were involved in.

Indeed, I'd struggle to name the winner of the Open Championship held at the Carnoustie Golf Links in 1999, but I'll never forget the comedy of errors that led to French golfer Jean van der Velde standing ankle-deep in the Barry Burn (below). Or that while my colleagues used their sharp elbows for the best vantage points, I walked away from where he was staring down the fairway, stopped and found the decisive view – his ball caught in his shadow!



Look for unexpected vantage points to capture what other photographers won't



The emotion caught in this shot perfectly sums up the momentous Rugby World Cup final in 2003



Good timing, and anticipating what those around you will do, can make for a great image



4 Seeing a picture

For me, one of the most important, if not the most vital aspect of being a photographer, is how we actually see an image. Be it in our mind's eye, our imagination or creativity – call it what you will – it defines us all as photographers. I can be shoulder-to-shoulder in a line of photographers behind the goal at Wembley or the tryline at Twickenham, and it's only our individual creativity that sets us apart. The cameras these days are so technically advanced that my teenage son could capture a usable image, indeed all the photographers are pretty much using the same Canon or Nikon cameras and lenses, but it's the eye of the photographer that makes the difference.

The longest men's final in the history of Wimbledon, an incredible 4 hours 48 minutes, was in 2008. The clock on the scoreboard in the background showed 9.26pm, and in the almost darkness there was no way the flash-lit pictures of my colleagues would capture the whole picture. So by setting my camera at a very slow shutter speed and by trying to keep as still as possible, I fired the shutter at exactly the time I anticipated their flashguns. I was somehow able to capture just one good frame from a final in 2008: Rafael Nadal being lit by another flash, illuminated in the darkness (above).



Frits van Eldik

Frits photographed his first Formula 1 Grand Prix in 1989 and by 1994 he was shooting all the F1 races throughout the season. In the past few years Frits has shot different kinds of motorsports, including the Le Mans races, MotoGP and 'everything else that moves fast'. Frits is a Canon ambassador. www.fritsvaneldik.nl

Practice makes perfect, so make sure you put in as much time as you can with your subject

5 Be proficient

While it's quite possible to create a portfolio of great but lucky shots, you want to be able to take striking images every time you head out with your camera. Shoot as much as you can, and so long as you understand why something hasn't quite worked or you missed a shot because you were taking a risk, these experiences will pay you back. Your wastage rate will come down massively until you're shooting engaging shots on a regular basis.

© FRITS VAN ELDIK

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CHANGING PHOTOGRAPHY

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PHOTO BY ADRIAN WEINBRECHT

Don't be afraid to take a chance, as more often than not you'll be rewarded with better shots

6 No risk, no glory

My feeling is that anyone can take a good action picture, but for people to really connect with an image you have to be prepared to take a risk. For instance, shooting at a slower shutter speed can produce a much more interesting and striking shot than one of the same subject but at a much faster shutter speed – although there's a much bigger risk of failure here. However, if you're prepared to take the risks, you'll be rewarded with much more exciting imagery.

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June 15



June 15

LUMIX





Andy Hooper

Andy is a five-times winner of the UK Sports Photographer of the Year, and has documented major sporting events across the globe and photographed many of the world's greatest athletes

for over 20 years. His work has been consistently recognised by The Picture Editor's Guild, The Sports Journalism Awards and The British Press Awards. www.andyhooper.co.uk

7 Freeze the action

Freezing the action is probably the most important technique in sports and action photography. It's also the one most people struggle with when they first start out. A shutter speed of between 1/500sec and 1/1,000sec used to be enough to freeze the action, but with digital capture we're finding that it's best to use at least 1/2,000sec to completely freeze the whole image, otherwise parts of the image might still be blurred, such as a football action shot in which tips of fingers, feet and even faces have movement in them. A shutter speed of 1/2,000sec is a good general rule to freeze all this motion, but when you're shooting really high-speed movement, for instance in water, diving or footballs and tennis balls, you may need at least 1/4,000sec.

ALL IMAGES ON THESE PAGES © ANDY HOOPER



With the latest cameras, it's possible to freeze the action even in the darkest conditions

Positioning is crucial to the success of the shot – get down low and shoot head-on



8 Positioning

Never underestimate the importance of a good position. After 20 years I still agonise over where to sit and whether to move six inches to my left or right. Just ask any football photographer how many times they've returned to the press centre and said the dreaded words, 'I was at the wrong end for all the goals.'

Positioning often comes down to personal preference, and mine for shooting action is to shoot low down and head-on. This accentuates the power of the athletes and makes the viewer feel part of the action. When in doubt, use this as your default position, as you know the drama is going to come towards you. If you'd like to do something more creative, shoot from the sidelines or from above. One sport where use can your creativity is cycling, because, really, you're just creating a classic landscape image that happens to have cyclists in it.

Once you've established where the light's coming from and if you're happy with it, you need to consider the background – sports arenas and stadiums are riddled with advertising boards, marshals and clutter. This may not sound important, but a simple clean background helps the action in the foreground stand out.

Don't be afraid to get up and move, especially during events that go on for a few hours. Motor racing is ideal for changing positions and seeking new angles. If you keep on the move you'll end up with a larger variety of images.



Don't be afraid to move around from your initial spot

9 Timing

Sports photography is all about timing. It doesn't matter whether it's a racket, club or foot hitting the ball, you've got to time it perfectly. Avoid the temptation to take a burst of pictures using your fast motor drive and then choose the best one. This works to a degree, but the best way to get the perfect picture is to time the shutter release and take just one shot. Perfect timing enables you to position the ball in exactly the right place in the image. A good example of this is during a football penalty. Nine times out of ten, if you just shoot a sequence, you won't get the ball in the right place. But if you take one picture you've timed just right, you'll get the image you want of the ball leaving the footballer's boot. This also applies to most racket sports and rugby, football and cricket.

While professional photographers may use both these techniques together, timing is a skill every photographer needs to learn. Having been at Wimbledon for two weeks, my timing was definitely better in the second week. The key is to watch a player's racket as they swing it back, and get ready to shoot as the racket moves forward. Check your LCD display to see whether you're pressing the shutter release too early or too late and adjust accordingly. Perfecting your timing is an ongoing process.



Timing is everything – learn to position the ball in exactly the right place

Avoid the temptation to hold down the shutter button as you could miss the crucial moment



10 Know your sport

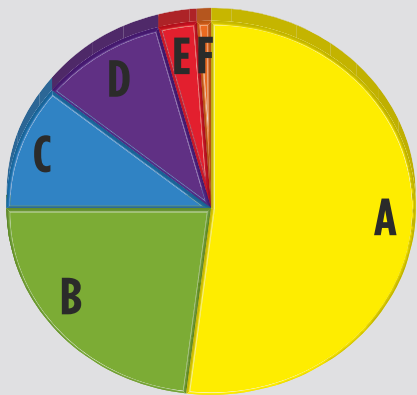
Taking the time to research your sport will always pay dividends. Just as a professional sportsman can't expect to turn up at the track and win the 100m with no preparation, a photographer can't expect to turn up and shoot the perfect image. All sports have their own stars: are they left or right footed? Where do they run when they score a goal? Which team is most likely to win? Where do the fans sit? When does the height of the action take place? Where is the sun going to be and at what time? All these things need consideration.

Having spent time at Wimbledon, I've

learnt that it's best to photograph Serena Williams' double-handed backhand (right). By sitting to her left as she plays the shot on the baseline, you can capture an image that shows off her muscles and power. Knowing this makes choosing where to sit a no-brainer. Cricket is a technical sport where it helps to know the ebb and flow of the game. In this way you can anticipate what's going to happen, because the key action actually takes place quite quickly in an otherwise long game. Doing your homework will help you make the right decisions, which might lead to a great image rather than an average one.



Get to know your subject and sport for the best shots



In AP 18 July we asked...

Would you ever buy a camera with an EVF?

You answered...

A Yes, I already have one	52%
B No, nothing can beat an optical viewfinder	23%
C Yes, but I'll wait to see what the next generation technology is like	11%
D Yes, my next camera will have an EVF	10%
E No, I just don't like the idea of them	3%
F No, I can't use one as it gives me headaches	1%

What you said

'The EVF was the inevitable and very welcome successor to the opto-mechanical reflex viewfinder. After all, the TV camera had an EVF virtually from the start'

'Somehow I don't think that in future there will be the option of optical viewfinders. I'm not concerned with using an EVF, I'm more concerned we won't have proper viewfinders at all and will have to compose shots with the inferior live view method at arm's length – God forbid!'

'I have a camera with an EVF – a Fujifilm bridge, which I still use occasionally, but I don't like EVFs. The Fuji was a compromise. The poll was missing an "I have one but I don't like them" option'

'They don't give me headaches, but they do make me nauseous, disorientated and make me fall over'

This week we ask

'Do you ever use a projector to show your photos?'

Vote online www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

Guess the camera



Every other week we post a photograph of a camera on our Facebook page and all you have to do is guess the make and model. To guess the make and model of this camera (above), head over to www.facebook.com/Amateur.photographer.magazine. Forum members can also enter via the forum.



The 18 July issue's cover is from 15 March 1933. The winner is forum member Oly Backer, whose correct guess was the first drawn at random.

Inbox

Email amateurphotographer@timeinc.com and include your full postal address

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Agonising over APOY

As I write this, it's day seven of the APOY Macro Insects and Flowers month, and I've now narrowed my choice down to my favourite 11 photos. I only realistically have a few more days to get the perfect shot and spend any time agonising over the decision. (Yes, agonising! I do this every month, as I am sure all who take part do).

This month is good because I have 11 possible shots. Most months, I only have a couple, maybe three or four at the most, and sometimes one of those might be a clear winner. But even then, I agonise. Does the picture fit the brief? Is this really what the judges are after? Do I go for the arty (slightly out of focus) one because I love it and the judges might too? Or should I play it safe with the crystal-clear (but strangely cropped) beautiful shot? In

fact, why am I even writing this when I should be spending the time narrowing my choice down to my favourite 10 images?

In truth, I'm not sure I've ever taken a 'perfect' photo. So, like the surfer searching for the perfect wave, I reach for the camera once again. The wind is dropping and the light is just about right. The surf is non-existent (here in the middle of France), but I hear a buzzing in the air. Time to catch that moment. **Mike Smith, France**

I think we can all identify with that particular agony, Mike. They say that photographers are the worst editors of their own photos – I certainly find editing my pictures much more difficult than taking them. But do keep entering!
– Nigel Atherton, Editor



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With ultra-fast performance, the new Samsung 16GB EVO SD card, Class 10, Grade 1, offers up to 48MB/sec transfer speed and has a ten-year warranty.
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To a T

In your informative piece on t-stops (AP 25 July) you stated that doubling the diameter of the iris opening (the aperture) doubled the light passing through the lens. This is not the case – the light passed depends on the *area* of the opening, not the diameter. As the iris is as near a circle as the manufacturer can manage, the area is given by πr^2 , where r is the radius of the circle or $1/2$ the diameter. So opening the aperture from $1/4$ to $1/2$ of the focal length (f/4 to f/2) increases the light fourfold, that, is by 2 stops.

T-stops are used in the cinema industry because slight differences in exposure resulting from different levels of loss in different lenses become obvious and distracting when the director cuts from one camera to another shooting the same scene. This not a problem with stills photography or if

only one camera is used.

David Humble, Pembrokeshire

You are, of course, completely right. Indeed, a number of readers spotted this error. Our apologies for any confusion caused – Andy Westlake, technical editor

Maths mix-up

Wayne Eardley didn't think his arithmetic through in his letter to AP (*Inbox*, 18 July), when he mentioned £720 per pixel. That would be £36 billion (not £36,000 – it's actual price) for the Hasselblad H5D-50's 50 million pixels. I knew they were expensive, but I guess inflation has crept up a little more than I expected when I wasn't watching. By Wayne's logic, the Canon is only £1.5 billion – thank goodness, I'll start saving up!

Roger Christie, Cumbria

Camera inclusive

Why is it assumed that all AP readers use DSLRs? We don't. The (very good) *Mastering depth of field* article (AP 18 July), could be read as generic to any camera/lens, but in the hyperfocal distance charts it refers specifically to DSLRs. Are these charts not applicable to any lens, irrespective of camera? I think the full-frame data might also apply to 35mm film cameras! It will be interesting to follow how quickly this type of article keeps up with the trend toward mirrorless cameras.

Keith Walker, Dorset

So long SLRs?

Richard Sibley concluded his fascinating review of the Leica Q (AP 18 July) with the words, 'When the viewfinder and focusing are this good, the rangefinder is looking more and more obsolete'. But exactly the same reasoning leads me to conclude that the



Kyle Tallett's image of flooding around Fairfield church. Left: Phil Hall's 'flooded' picture courtesy of Photoshop

SLR is similarly moribund. I recently swapped my much-loved but massive Olympus E-3 DSLR for the more capable OM-D E-M1 CSC. The E-M1's workmanlike EVF and lack of SLR mirror results in a svelte form roughly the size of my OM-series film SLRs.

For professional photography, I make use exclusively of Nikon cameras, with a strong preference for the D4 series. For personal photography, I am (contentedly) locked in to the Olympus system, even with its relatively small sensor, due to the need to use my collection of OM and Four Third lenses. However, if I were in the market for a high-end camera for personal use, I would never again buy an SLR as their day has passed.

I would buy a high-end but small full-frame CSC with a high-quality EVF, assuming that high-resolution lenses were available for the camera. Right now, I would buy a Sony Alpha 7, and treat myself to some of those lovely Carl Zeiss lenses – that is, if I couldn't wait for the small, high-end, EVF-equipped CSCs that I am certain Nikon, Canon and other

manufacturers will soon release.

Surely it won't be long before the flipping mirror has vanished from use?

Dennis Holland, Cambridgeshire

After a slow start, mirrorless cameras are beginning to take off, at the expense of DSLR sales. It would be interesting to hear whether other readers still think there's a future for the traditional DSLR – Nigel Atherton, Editor

Fairfield flood

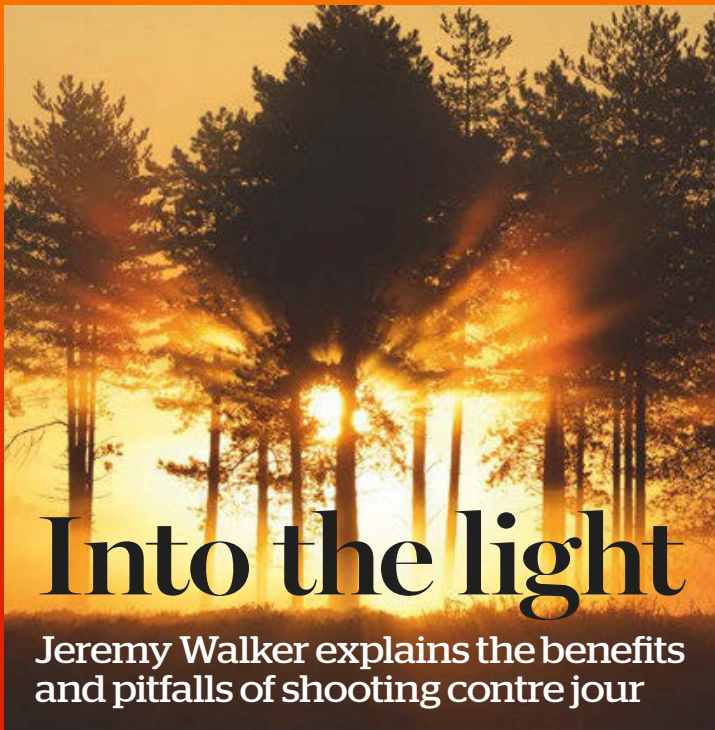
I enjoyed the *Creative Photoshop* article in which the Displace Filter was used to create the impression of flooding in front of Fairfield church (AP 18 July). As my image shows (above right), I've seen it flooded for real!

Kyle Tallett, Kent



The full-frame Sony Alpha 7 compact system camera

In next week's issue On sale Tuesday 11 August



Into the light

Jeremy Walker explains the benefits and pitfalls of shooting contre jour

Digital Armageddon

How upset would you be if you lost all your photos, and what are you doing to make sure that never happens?

Canon PowerShot G3 X

Andy Westlake assesses Canon's new high-zoom, premium compact

Sony Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 IV

We test the latest incarnation of one of the world's best compact cameras

Contact

Amateur Photographer, Time Inc. (UK), Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU
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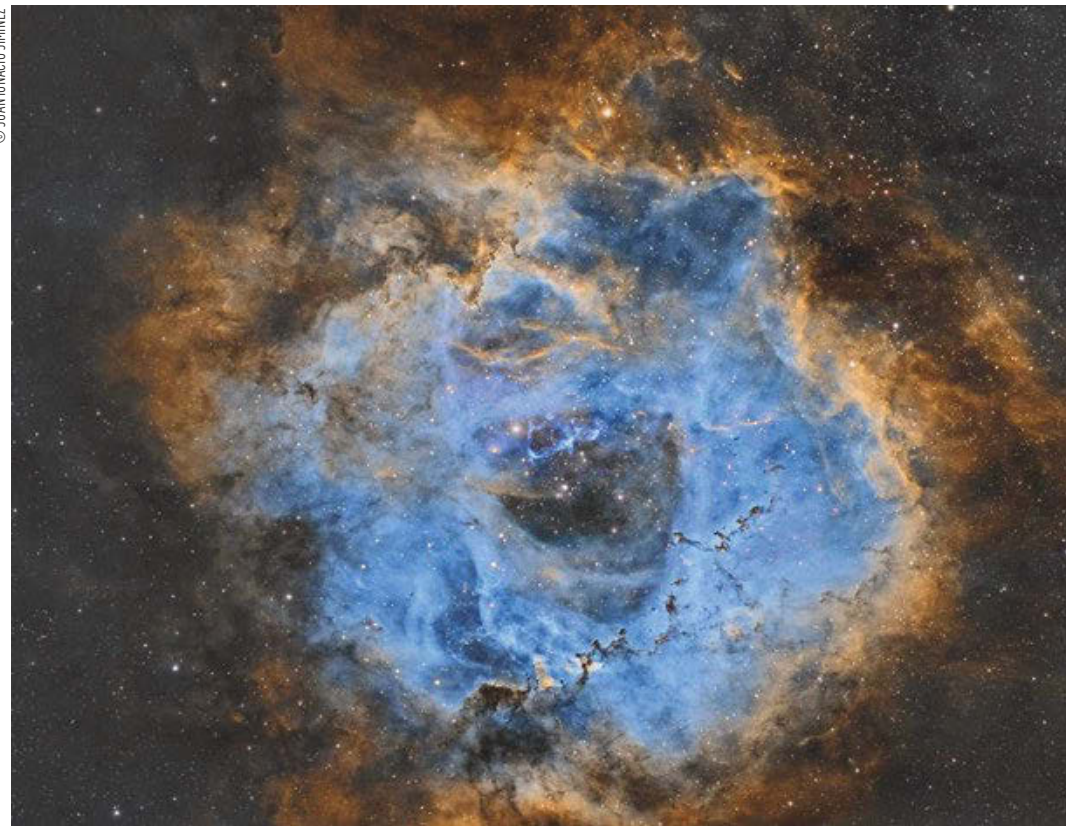
The Final Frontier

We take a look at a selection of images from the **Astronomy Photographer of the Year 2015** shortlist

The vastness of the universe can do tricky things to the human mind. It can either make us feel part of some unknowable cosmic plan, or make us feel utterly insignificant. But regardless of your beliefs, only the most hardened soul could fail to be moved and awed by the rich and complex elements that make up our observable solar system.

The Insight Astronomy Photographer of the Year (APOTY) competition is once again upon us, and as ever the images are well and truly mind-blowing. The judges have selected a shortlist of 100 images from a pool of around 2,700 entries. The overall winner will be announced on 17 September and will take home £2,500.

© JUAN IGNACIO JIMINEZ



Thor's Helmet Adam Block

◀ Around 11,000 light years away, the bubble shape of Thor's Helmet (otherwise known as nebula NGC 2359) is mainly due to interstellar material swept up by the winds of the nebula's central star, Wolf-Rayet – an extremely hot giant thought to be in a pre-supernova stage.

© ADAM BLOCK

Roseta-NBv5 Juan Ignacio Jiminez

⬆ Here the photographer has applied a false colour palette to several pictures. By using narrowband filters, which only allow a specific colour of light to reach the camera (with each one linked to a specific interstellar gas), he has captured the striking blues and oranges we can see.

© IVAN VAN NIEKERK



Quiver Trees and Shooting Star
Ivan van Niekerk

◀ The Milky Way shines over quiver trees at Bet-El Farm in the Northern Cape of South Africa. The photographer used diffused LED lights to illuminate the trees, rivalling the glow from the stars above.

Aurora Panorama 3
Jan R Olsen

▶ The vivid green northern lights dance above Lyngenfjord, the longest fjord in Troms county, Norway, tracing out the shape of the Earth's magnetic field above the waters. Green – the most common colour associated with aurorae – is produced by oxygen atoms and molecules, which are energised by solar particles that have escaped the sun's atmosphere.

© JULIE FLETCHER



Calm Before the Storm
Julie Fletcher

This is a phenomenal natural light show; the lightning emanating from the underside of ominous storm clouds is juxtaposed against the gleaming stars of the Milky Way above. The photographer had watched the storm front over Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre National Park in South Australia for around two hours before capturing this tumultuous scene, and used a graduated filter upside down to balance the exposure from top to bottom and showcase the beauty of our galaxy.

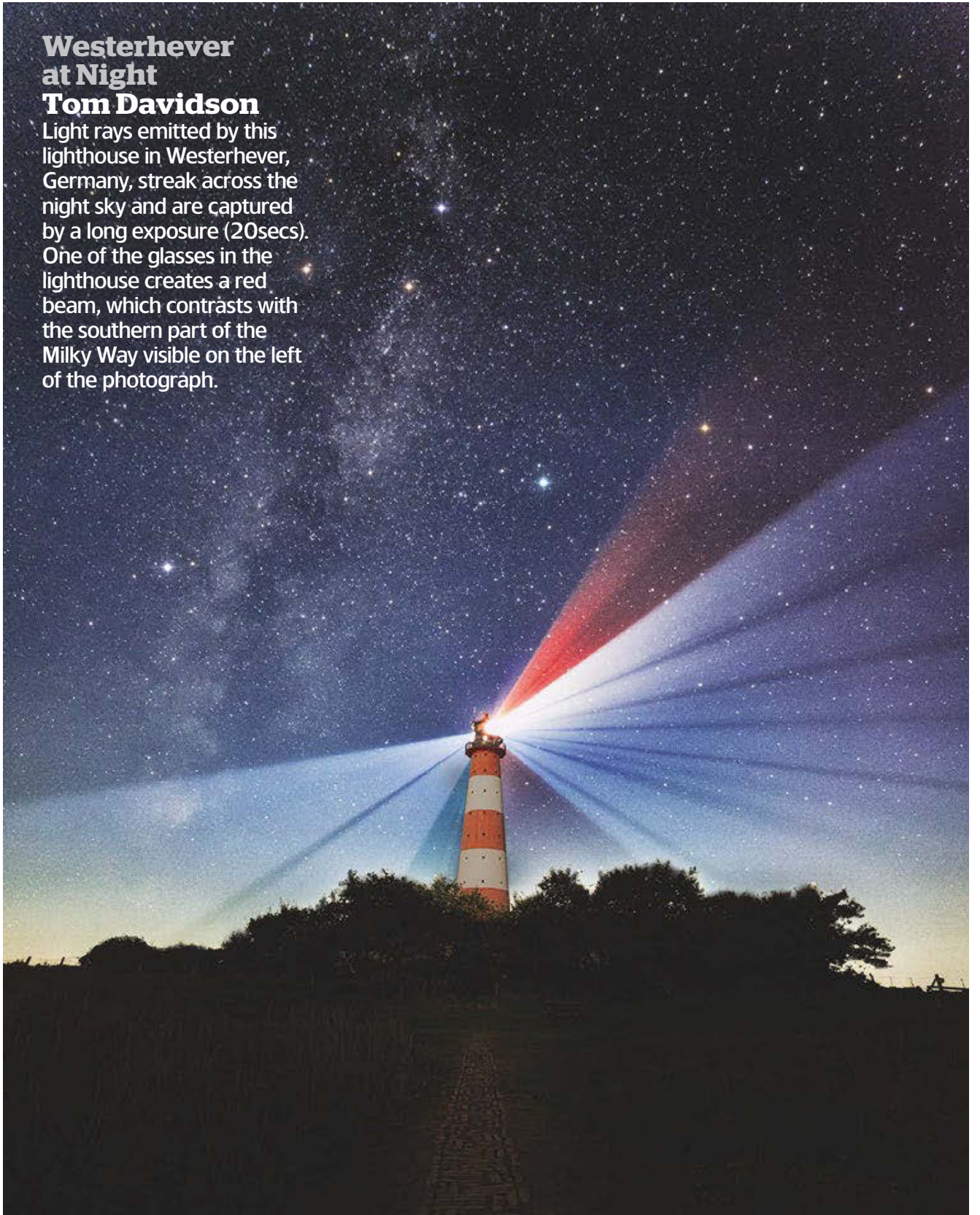
© JAN R. OLSEN



© TOM DAVIDSON

Westerhever at Night Tom Davidson

Light rays emitted by this lighthouse in Westerhever, Germany, streak across the night sky and are captured by a long exposure (20secs). One of the glasses in the lighthouse creates a red beam, which contrasts with the southern part of the Milky Way visible on the left of the photograph.



**Star Trails over
Green Lake**
Dan Barr

Star trails over a campfire-lit Green Lake in the Hoover Wilderness of California, USA. Star trails are a popular subject to capture using long-exposure times. While they appear to illustrate the movement of the stars, they in fact show the rotation of the Earth on its axis.



© DAN BARR

C/2014 Q2 Lovejoy
Michael Jaeger

Comet Lovejoy sails through the solar system in a green haze, leaving cometary dust in its wake. This particular astronomical body, C/2014 Q2, is the fifth comet to have been discovered by Australian amateur astronomer and astrophotographer Terry Lovejoy.

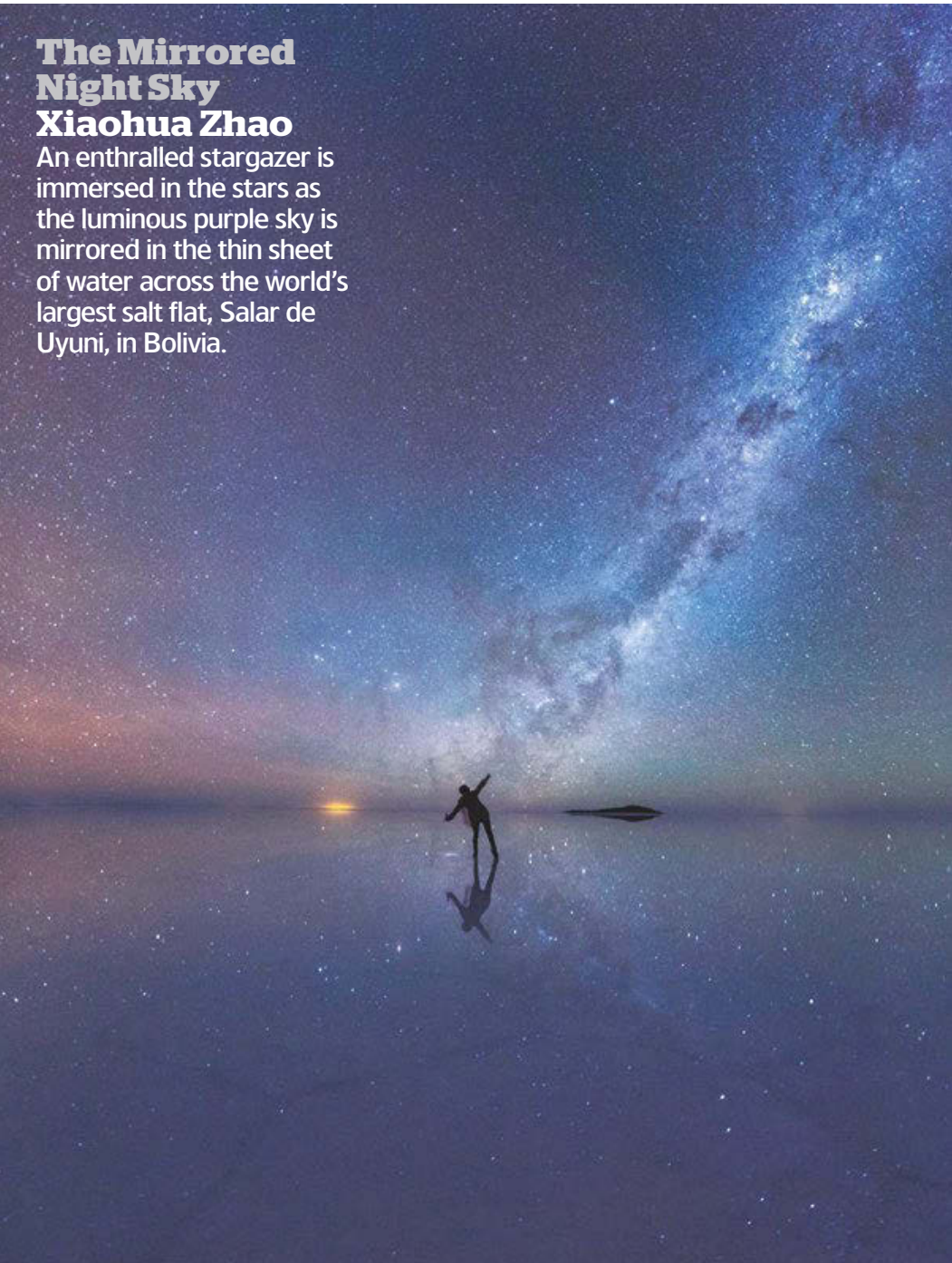
© MICHAEL JAEGER



© PAUL ZITKA

**The Mirrored
Night Sky**
Xiaohua Zhao

An enthralled stargazer is immersed in the stars as the luminous purple sky is mirrored in the thin sheet of water across the world's largest salt flat, Salar de Uyuni, in Bolivia.

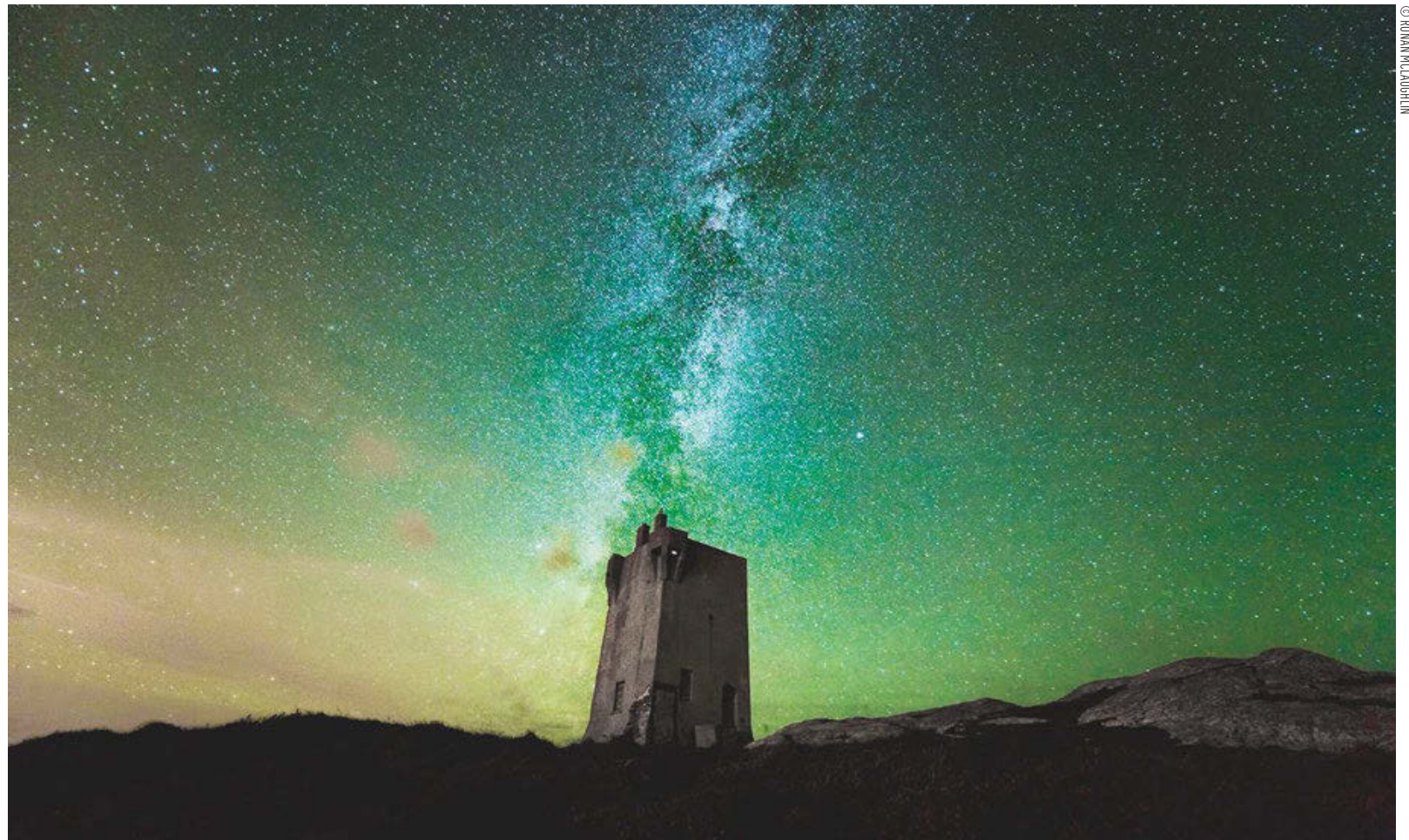


© XIAOHUA ZHAO

Winners of the nine categories and two special prizes will be announced on 17 September at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, before going on show in a free exhibition the next day. The overall winner will receive £2,500. To find out more, visit www.rmg.co.uk and www.flickr.com/groups/astrophoto



© STEFANO DE ROSA



© RÓNÁN McLAUGHLIN

Full Moon over the Alps Stefano De Rosa

◀ This is a truly majestic sight of the full moon setting behind the rose-tinted Alps. It was taken in the silent pre-dawn surroundings of Superga hill in Turin, Italy, mere minutes before sunrise.

The 'Tower' and the Milky Way Rónán McLaughlin

⬆ In Ireland's County Donegal, the Milky Way illuminates the sky above a derelict building known as 'The Tower' that was built in 1805 by the Admiralty, and later used as a Lloyd's Signal Station.

Full Moonrise Composite Steve Knight

⬆ The photographer set the camera to take images two seconds apart to create a timelapse. He then selected six images taken 140 seconds apart and stacked them using StarStaX software.



Glacier Aurora II Paul Zizka

Lining up all the ingredients for a night shoot at the Athabasca Glacier in Jasper National Park, Canada, was exciting enough for the photographer, but when the sky filled with aurora it was his dream come true. The aurora showed a wide array of colours and shapes over the Canadian Rockies and lasted several hours.



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*Quote by Darron Hartas former editor of Master Photographer magazine

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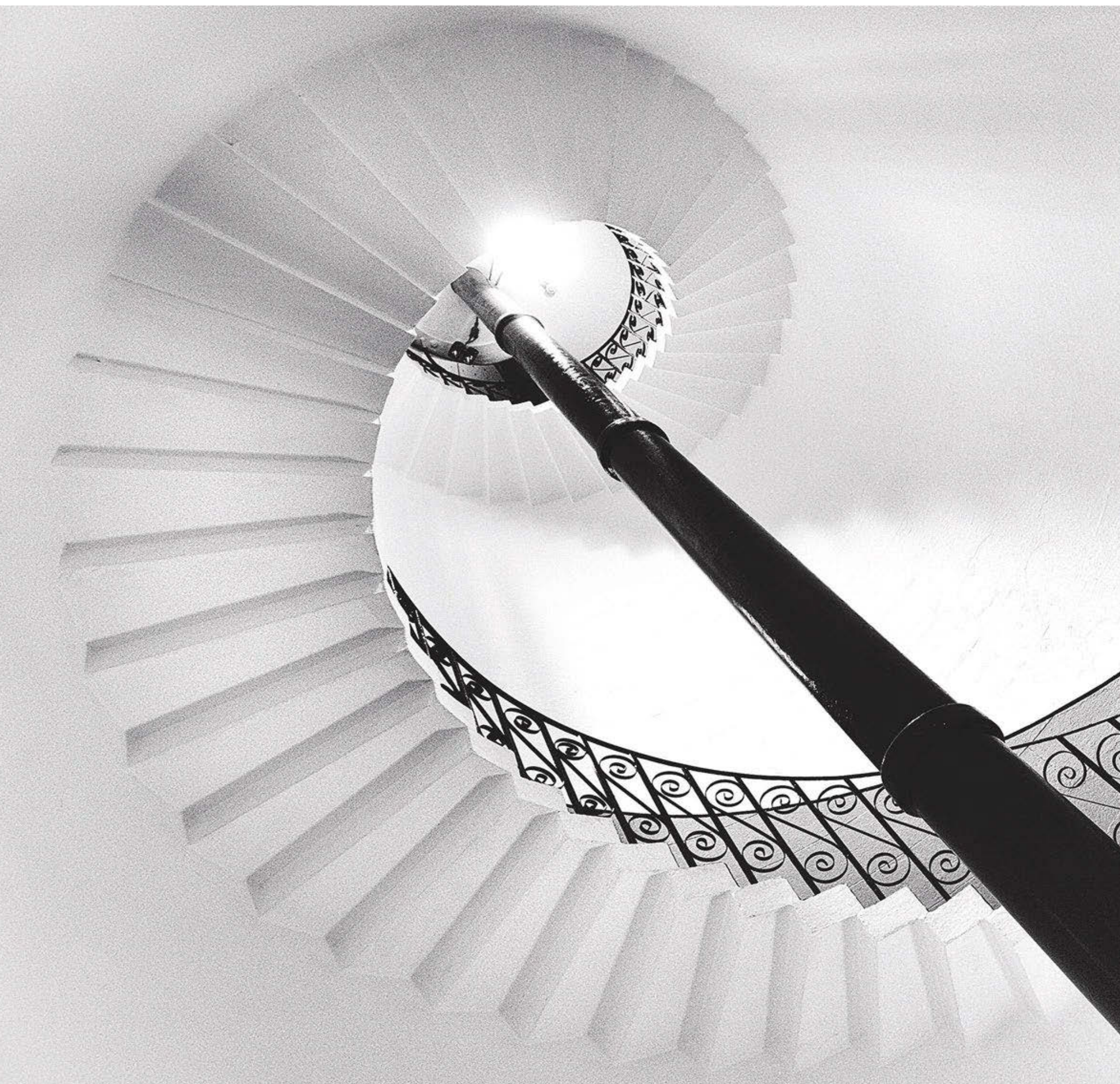
NIKON Df + 50mm f/1.8G AF-S GOLD EDITION

In November 2014, Nikon Japan announced a very special limited-edition black and gold model of its Nikon Df camera. The new model was only available in Japan in limited quantities and was released by the end of the year. The body-only model was released in a limited run of only 600 units. The kit edition included a special gold version of the AF-S 50mm f/1.8G Nikkor in a 1,000-unit run. To pair with the limited-edition camera, Nikon also introduced a number of gold accessories, which include a gold shutter release AR-11G and a AN-DC9G matching strap.

With the Nikon Df Gold, Nikon opted for a much more subtle approach than they have done in the past with the Nikon FM Gold and Nikon FA Gold, only giving it a few gold accents where they would have the most impact. This subtlety also means Nikon's rendition is much more attractive and we are informed it was an immediate sell-out in Japan. Grays of Westminster are delighted to announce they have secured an example of this unique kit. NEW £5,000



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KIT LIST



◀ Wideangle lens

A 20-28mm focal-length range will enable you to get good views of most staircases, but shooting with an extreme wideangle will allow you to get much more dramatic views and include the whole shape.



◀ Fisheye lens

A fisheye lens will not only offer an extreme angle of view, but also distort the natural pattern formed by the staircase, adding a unique interpretation to your image.





Craig Roberts

Craig Roberts has been a professional photographer for more than 20 years and specialises in travel and landscapes. He's written technique articles for every major photo magazine and now offers online photography courses and tuition from his website. www.craigrobertsphotography.co.uk

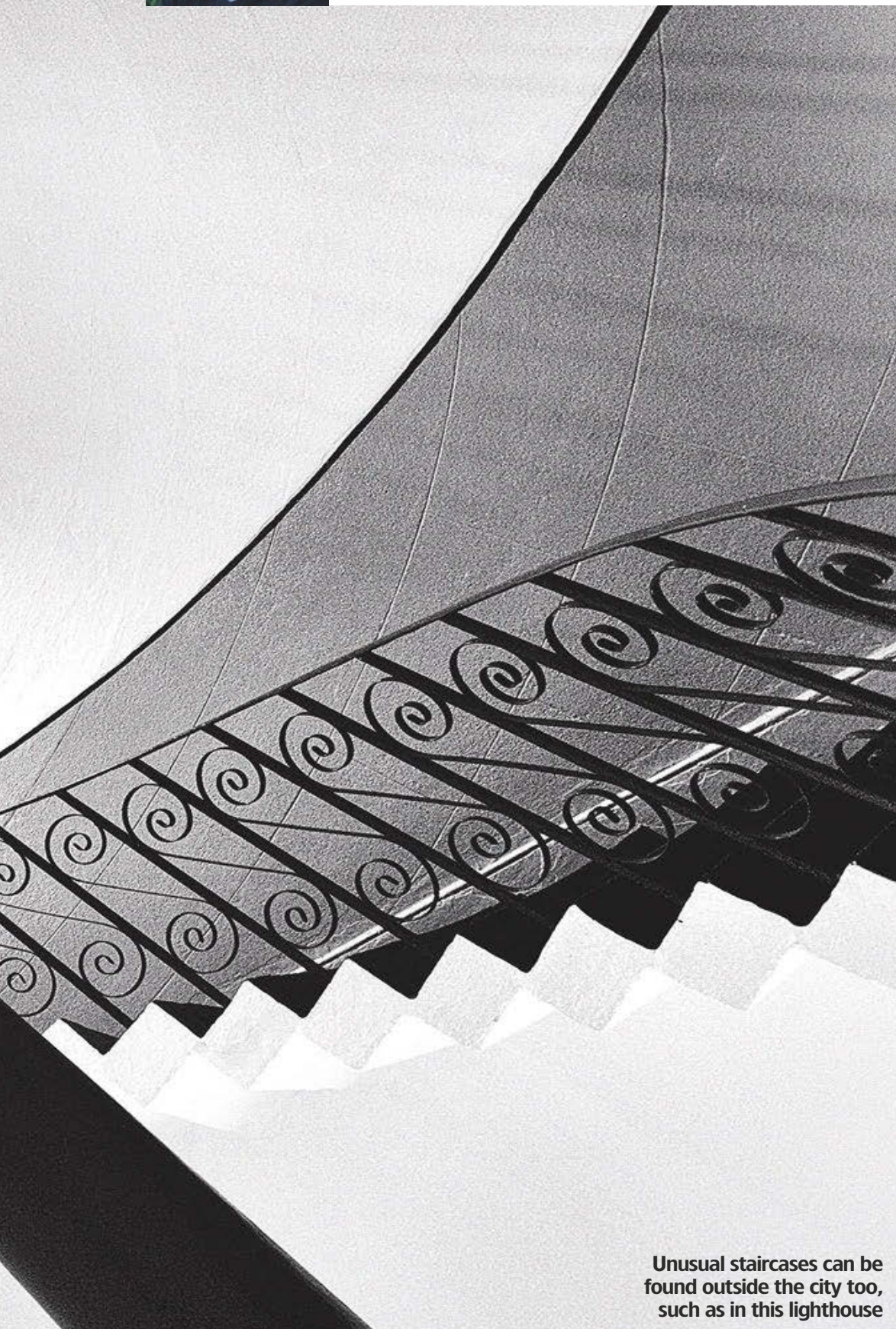
Step class

Craig Roberts discovers the charms of staircases, an often overlooked photographic opportunity

Staircases have been around for centuries, and many are designed as part of a building's internal beauty rather than just a means of emergency escape if the lifts fail. Square or spiral, metal or wooden, their designs are often unique and, fortunately, many lend themselves to abstract studies. Stay alert to opportunities: they can be all too easy to miss if you take the lazy route to an upper floor. However, if you seek them out when visiting a town, city or other location, they make a welcome addition to a portfolio of images, as this guide will reveal.

Design

Photography is about composition, and composition is about shape, design and, in many cases, patterns. Fortunately, staircases have all these in abundance. The natural design of staircases makes them very photogenic and



Unusual staircases can be found outside the city too, such as in this lighthouse

ALL PICTURES © CRAIG ROBERTS



Look down the staircase to see how you can compose your image. Use a neck or wrist strap to avoid dropping your camera

◀ Tilting LCD screen

If your camera has one, use the tilting LCD screen to compose your images. You could also shoot via Wi-Fi from your smartphone if your camera has this option. Both are great ways to shoot looking straight up.



◀ Beanbag

A small beanbag is a useful accessory to place on a banister for support, especially in locations where a tripod isn't convenient or allowed.

▶ Wrist strap or neck strap

When leaning over the top banister of a tall flight of stairs with your camera, the last thing you want to do is drop it. Use a strap to avoid an expensive and possibly dangerous accident.





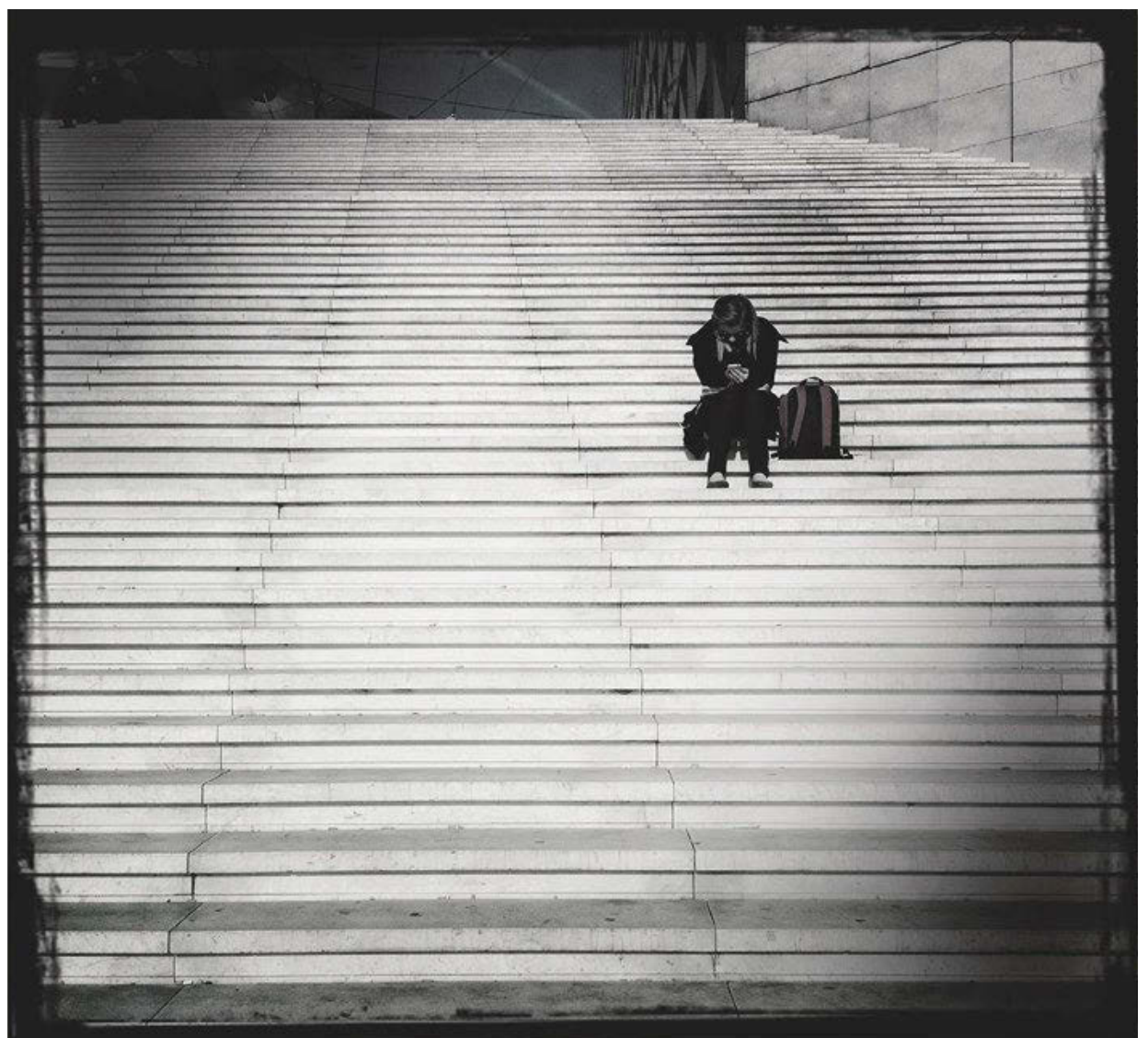
Fisheye lenses aren't as expensive as they once were and really come into their own with these types of subjects. However, be careful not to include your own feet in the shot

➤ pleasing to the eye, especially the way they lead from one floor to another, changing direction and overlapping each level. This shaping acts as a natural pattern for the eye to follow around the frame and you can use this as the basis of your composition, or alternatively, shoot in more abstract form. This also applies to spiral staircases, but there are still images to be captured in the less-dramatic, straight-up design too, and it's this contrast in design that makes them so interesting and unique.

Exposure and white balance

Shooting indoors brings with it two key problems – artificial light and low-light conditions. Tungsten bulbs are bright enough to illuminate the interior for your eyes, but less effective for your camera. They also cause some odd colour shifts that, again, only your camera records, as your brain can neutralise this back to a standard white light. Thankfully, digital cameras have a built-in correcting system and this is where the white balance feature comes in.

You can tailor the white balance to suit the light source, and tungsten is just one of the preset choices available. This usually corrects the colour cast with a press of a button, but sometimes it can be nice to have a slight glow of colour shift, which adds to the look and feel ➤



Remember to include people using the stairs in your shots, as they can provide additional interest

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The distance learning was very helpful to me as I cannot commit to regular days in the week. I enjoy the feedback, which is honest and fair but constructive.

Lee Hyett-Powell
Diploma in Digital Photography

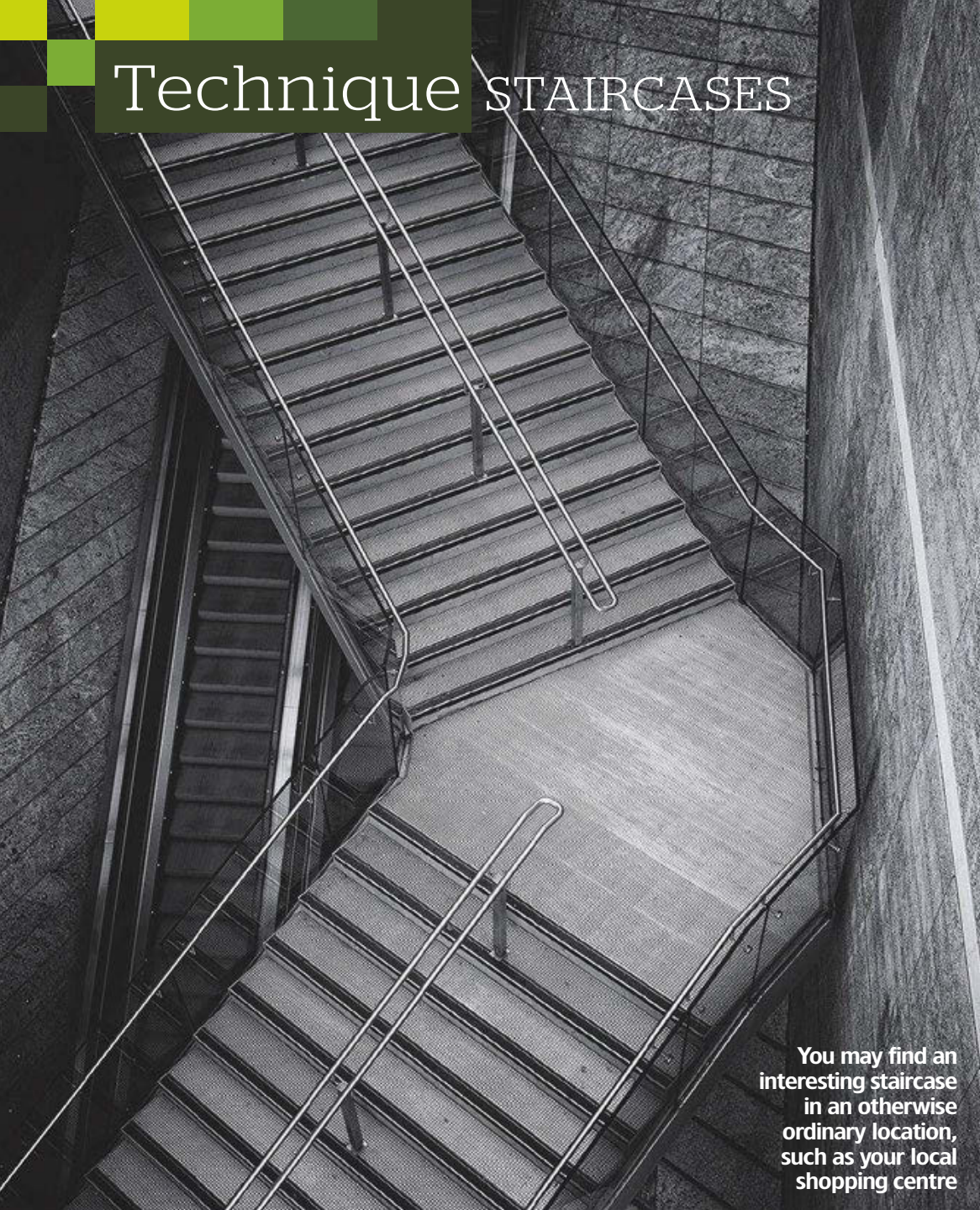
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Technique STAIRCASES



You may find an interesting staircase in an otherwise ordinary location, such as your local shopping centre



Switch to a standard lens and you can start creating more abstract views using the shape and design of the stairs

➤ of the staircase. This can be tailored in-camera if shooting JPEGs using the custom white balance control, but a much easier way to do this is to shoot in raw and adjust this back at home on the computer. You can then dial this in to suit the picture and fine-tune it for the perfect look and feel.

Correcting it entirely can leave the image looking a bit cold and sterile, so tweaking the white balance to allow some of the warmth created from tungsten lighting to stay in the picture is the best option.

With white balance taken care of, you then need to consider your ISO setting to allow image capture without any annoying camera shake. Light levels inside buildings are often low, so you may need ISO 800, or even ISO 1,600, to get a high enough shutter speed, while still maintaining a good aperture selection for sufficient depth of field.

Switch on the image-stabilising system (either on the camera or the lens itself) to help you with camera shake and then use banisters or walls around the staircase to brace yourself for a slow shutter speed. Good handholding technique comes into its own here, so tuck in your elbows, hold your breath and press the shutter button nice and slowly, rather than stabbing at it, to guarantee sharp images.

It's inevitable that a tripod probably won't be allowed or even be an option on a staircase, so get your camera set up and the technique perfected for blur-free handheld shots.

Composition

We've already mentioned the patterns and shapes inherent in staircase design, and this is what you need to be looking out for as you frame up your shots. The best approach is to head to the top floor and

start shooting from there first, looking down from the top of the staircase. This often gives the best view, with the full shape revealed all the way to the ground floor. Then, with that view in the bag, start making your way down the staircase and capture the other views you'll see on the way. Look out for lights, chandeliers or side windows, which will add to the overall pattern and complement the shape of the stairs.

Look at the steps themselves. See how the light catches them and the shapes they make on their own. You may need a slightly longer focal length to capture these in more abstract form and these can provide secondary, closer views of the same staircase. Work your way down to the ground floor, shooting as you go – but of course, not shooting as you walk – and avoid getting in the way of other people using the staircase.

Once you reach the bottom, look up. This will give you quite a different view of the entire staircase. Watch for roof lights, which may affect your exposure, and you might need to overexpose your images by 1 or 2 stops to allow for any brighter areas fooling your camera's internal metering. Check the results on your camera's LCD screen and use the histogram to determine any exposure adjustment required.

AP

Getting permission

MANY staircases will be in a public place, so shooting them shouldn't be a problem. If they are photogenic enough, you won't be the only person who will have taken pictures of them. However, some hotels and private buildings feature great staircases too, so it's worth asking at reception, or even the security personnel, if you can take a few pictures. They may say no, but in many cases you'll probably find they will allow you a few minutes to take photos – if you avoid getting in anyone's way. So have your camera set up ready to make the most of your available time and make a quick route from top to bottom, capturing the best views.



You can almost guarantee spectacular results with spiral staircases. Shoot from below with your wideangle lens and allow the spiral effect to create the image



Looking up from the bottom of a staircase can often reveal a new and exciting shape that you don't see as you climb to the upper floors

Five top staircases

THE INTERNET is a fantastic tool for finding new and unusual-looking staircases around the country. You only have to search a photo library or photo-sharing website such as Flickr and you'll find a plethora of different-shaped staircases that fellow photographers have captured. It's also an idea to keep an eye out when on your travels for interesting staircases. In the meantime, here are a few top locations to get you started.

- The Queen's House, Greenwich, London SE10
- City Hall, London SE1
- De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill, East Sussex
- Museum of Liverpool, Liverpool L3
- Baltic Centre, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear

Reader Portfolio

Spotlight on readers' excellent images and how they captured them



Paul Ratje, Taiwan



Paul's love of photography began when he was seven, growing up in New Mexico, USA. With every shot of his Kodak flick-open pocket camera he would try to improve his compositional skills.

In 2007 Paul saved up for his first DSLR – a Nikon D100. He now shoots with a Canon EOS 5D Mark II and has recently adopted a Canon EOS 6D. Paul has always had a passion for photographing people and has dabbled with street photography, most of which was taken around Asia. His dream is to become a full-time photojournalist.

A Girl Becomes a Nun, Myanmar

1 As well as the shallow depth of field, the crucial thing here is that the girl is making eye contact with the lens

Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 70-200mm, 1/200sec at f/2.8, ISO 400

Lion's Head Mountain

2 Paul has managed to find some semblance of compositional order in this mystifyingly constructed roof of the Quanhua Temple in Miaoli, Taiwan

Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 50mm, 1/2000sec at f/8, ISO 400



Women in the Fabric Store

3 Paul has not only given us a vibrantly colourful scene, but has also played with our perception regarding the woman and mannequins – you have to look twice to figure out who's real and who isn't

Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 50mm, 1/125sec at f/2.8, ISO 200





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The two **Reader Portfolio** winners chosen every week will receive a copy of

Submit your images

Please see the 'Send us your pictures' section on page 3 for details or visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/portfolio



Sittwe Fish Market Kids

4 Despite its vibrant aesthetic, this astonishing scene in Myanmar is filled with an atmosphere of melancholy. The sight of these children digging through the garbage is heartbreaking
Canon EOS 6D, 24-105mm, 1/4000sec at f/7.1, ISO 1,600

Ba Jia Jiang in Hsinchu, Taiwan

5 This young man in Taiwan is dressed as a Ba Jia Jiang, one of the eight generals who are symbolic figures of the underworld in Chinese temple culture. They protect against ghosts and other evil deities
Canon EOS 6D, 24-105mm, 1/800sec at f/4, ISO 400



Reader Portfolio

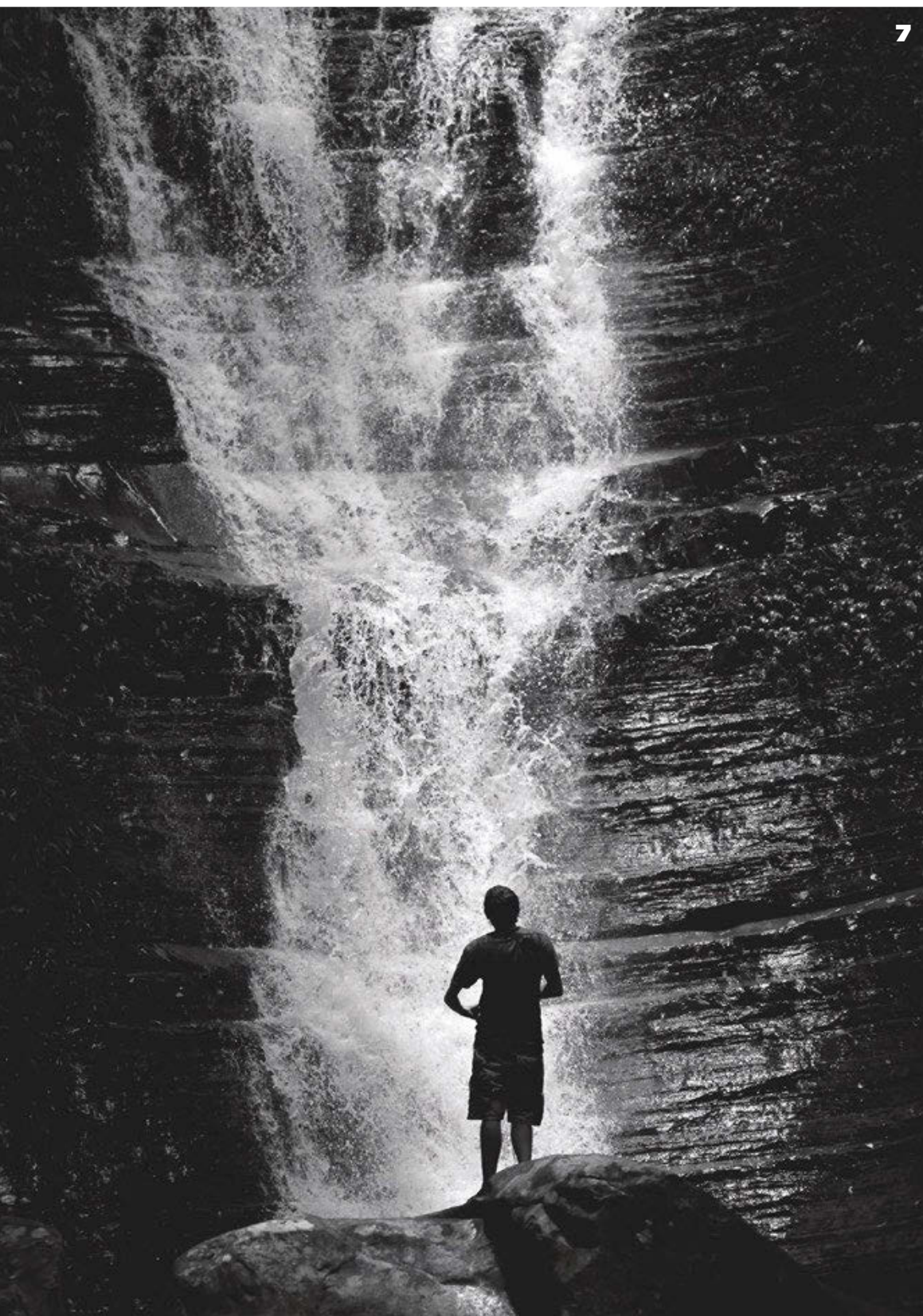


6

A Novice Learns

6 From a technical point of view, it's worth noting that Paul has used the white pages of the book to reflect light back into the scene and illuminate this young student's face in Myanmar

Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 24-105mm, 1/60sec at f/4, ISO 800



7

Taiwan Waterfall

7 To keep the figure as a silhouette, Paul was sure to meter on the waterfall. This has retained a vital level of detail on the rocks and water

Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 24-105mm, 1/1328sec at f/4, ISO 500

Sittwe Rickshaw Drivers

8 There are strong tonal contrasts in this image lit by the glow of Myanmar's morning sun

Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 35mm, 1/1250sec at f/2.8, ISO 400



8



10



Connor Cowboy

9 This image of Paul's nephew, Connor, was taken as the sun was starting to set, and it benefits from the subdued light
Nikon D100, 24-85mm, 1/20sec
at f/3.8, ISO 400

A Boy Becomes a Monk

10 This beautifully captured scene took place shortly after this boy's ceremony to become a monk in Myanmar
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 70-200mm, 1/1000sec at f/2.8, ISO 400



9



Appraisal

Expert advice and tips on improving your photography from **Damien Demolder**

AFTER



The final edited image in widescreen format

Street at night Alexey Samoylenko

Nikon D3, 12-24mm, 3secs at f/11, ISO 800

I RATHER like empty streets at night; they're often colourful and look unusual. We're used to seeing them full of cars, trucks and human life, but at night it's all swept away and the scene takes on a completely different appearance. Sometimes, though, wide streets at night can lack a point of focus – something for us to latch onto that draws our attention. I try not to create images in which all elements have equal importance, as the viewer doesn't know where to look first. Open, empty streets shot without careful composition can easily leave the viewer without direction.

What I like about Alexey's image is that we have the (almost) empty street scene, but there's the wonderful added interest of the man waiting for his kebab who we can see through the shop window. Suddenly we have a strong subject, and the rest of the frame, the street scene, becomes just backing vocals.

The problem with the street area of the shot, though, is that we don't believe it really looked like that. Alexey is showing off the dynamic range of his Nikon D3, but in doing so has created a tonal range most humans won't recognise. Whenever we've been out for a kebab late at night the shadows aren't filled quite like that, and the dark parts of the street are actually dark. And if we opened the front door and saw a sky like that, we'd more than likely assume that a volcanic eruption must have happened in the next town and we weren't hungry any more. Alexey's moderating of the architectural contrast does not match his darkening of the dramatic sky, and they seem to have come from two different scenes.

I've reintroduced a bit of contrast, darkened the shadows and allowed the colours to shine through. I think that's probably more like the way the place looked, and we can relate to it

BEFORE



The tonal range of this image seemed unrealistic

more readily. I can't do much about the sky without the original file, but it's a little less threatening and imposing now. There's a good deal more road than we need for a run-up into the picture, so I've also cropped the scene to 16x9 widescreen to enhance the movie-like atmosphere.

A nice scene, Alexey, and a great inclusion of the kebab-shop window, but keeping things realistic creates a more believable image.



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Picture
of the
week

By removing distracting
colour tones, we can enjoy
the real subject more quickly

Girl in the window

Jorge Gonçalves Silva

Nikon D90, 18-200mm, 1/250sec
at f/8, ISO 400

THIS picture's clever composition relies on there being a pattern and that pattern being broken by the element of the picture we're supposed to look at first. In a frame full of squares and hard angles, the roundness of the girl's head stands out – helped by the dark background behind her naturally lit face.

There are a couple of things that Jorge could have done differently, though. Everything isn't quite straight – he wasn't 100% square on to the window, and his zoom lens has introduced enough pincushion distortion to take away some of the power from the hard square angles. I've fixed that using the Transform tool. I'd also have tried to shoot it a little bit wide to give room to polish the straightening process in software, and made more use of helpful in-camera levels.

The second thing is the colour. The blues of the stone and the girl's clothes work well together, but they're quite strong and my eye goes to them before it goes to the girl's face. They need to be desaturated or removed. I've



gone for the removal option, but then added some warmth via a duotone. This simplifies the image, and helps us get to the real subject a little more quickly.

For all that, this is a great shot, Jorge, and you're a worthy winner of picture of the week.



The odd crop and distracting band of pale sand on the right made for an unsatisfying image

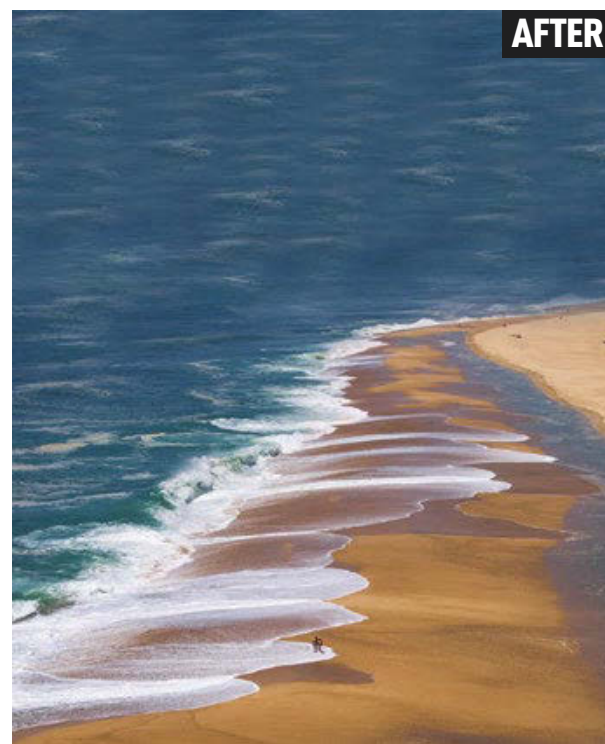
Shoreline Ionut Visan

Sony Alpha 33, 18-55mm, 1/1000sec at f/8, ISO 100

I LOVE what Ionut has seen here. That white foam stretching out across the ridge looks like spilt milk, and the colours of the sea work very nicely with the deep ochre of the wide channel of wet sand right up the middle of the frame. I like the lines that take us from the foreground and converge as they snake their way into the distance, and I love the couple strolling along to give us a focal point and a sense of scale.

Despite all that, though, the picture just doesn't seem to come together. I can see that Ionut didn't really know what to do with it, either, as he has cropped it to a funny shape that doesn't match any camera format. I'm not happy with intrusion of pale sand on the right, because it's brighter than the rest of the tones and draws too much of our attention.

The problem seems to be that the scene is all front-to-back, but the landscape framing emphasises left-to-right. Perhaps had Ionut turned his camera on its side the composition might have been more in harmony with the shapes and line of the view.



By extending the ocean, we see what the image would have looked like taken in portrait format

Damien Demolder is a photographer, journalist and photographic equipment expert, speaker, judge and educator. He has worked in the photographic publishing industry for 17 years, including 15 years at *Amateur Photographer*. He uses a wide range of equipment, from wooden plate cameras to the latest DSLRs, and is a great fan of all products that make good photography more accessible to more people

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Wacom Bamboo Stylus fineline

£38 • www.wacom.com

Does Wacom's Bamboo Stylus enhance image editing on the iPad? **Michael Topham** finds out

IF YOU own an iPad, and use it regularly to review, edit or share your images, you'll appreciate the responsiveness of the touchscreen and the way it reacts to the lightest of touches. Operating the screen with your fingers is great when you want to work quickly, but if you'd prefer to have the finest level of control possible, a stylus that allows you to draw, write and move around the screen more precisely is your best option.

Wacom's Bamboo Stylus fineline connects wirelessly via Bluetooth, features a 1.9mm nib and offers 1,024 levels of pressure sensitivity in compatible apps. As well as being useful for taking notes and doodling, it's an excellent tool for more precise editing tasks in photography apps like Lightroom Mobile and Snapseed.

In use, the Bamboo Stylus fineline responded quickly and proved to be particularly effective for applying selective adjustments and precise crops. It's very comfortable in the hand, thanks to its clean, tapered design. There's a single button to switch it on and off, and Wacom's Bamboo Paper app (free to download via iTunes) allows you to customise the button to different tasks and configure your writing posture.

Verdict

The only disadvantage of using the stylus compared to your finger is the noise it makes when it comes into contact with the surface of the screen, and any quick movements can result in rather loud tapping against the glass. However, if you want finer control of your iPad and fancy editing on it like a pen on paper, then the Wacom Bamboo Stylus fineline is worth a try and superb value for money.



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At a glance

- Compatible with: iPad 3 and 4; iPad Mini 1, 2 and 3; iPad Air 1
- 1024 levels of pressure sensitivity
- Available in five colours

ALSO CONSIDER



Cregle Ink R

£65, www.cregle.com

The Cregle Ink R is designed with a long-lasting tip and a rubber nib that produces no noises or scratches when in use. Like the Wacom Bamboo Stylus fineline it features Smart Power Off functionality to preserve battery life.



Wacom Bamboo Stylus Solo

£17, www.wacom.com

The Bamboo Stylus Solo is the cheapest stylus in Wacom's range and features a thick carbon-fibre nib. If you'd also like it with a ballpoint pen on the opposite end, the Bamboo Stylus Duo is worth a look and costs £25.



Wacom Intuos Creative Stylus 2

£65, www.wacom.com

This is Wacom's top-end Stylus and features a thinner, firmer tip, as well as providing a higher 2,048 levels of pressure sensitivity. Like the Bamboo Stylus, it's compatible with iPad Mini 1, 2 and 3, iPad 3 and 4 and the iPad Air 1.



Zkin Mayura Protective Wrapper

● £25 ● www.z-kin.com

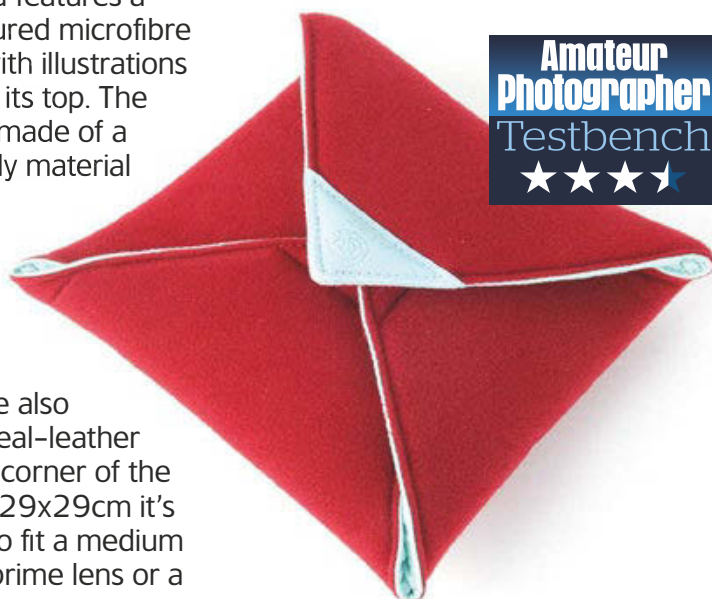
THIS camera or lens wrap is rather useful for those lenses or cameras that haven't come with any kind of protective casing, or even for those that have but perhaps need better protection. While several companies make these kind of wraps, including Domke and Tenba, they're often very plain and offer only a small amount of padding.

The Zkin Mayura's material, however, is quite thick and provides good padding when a camera or lens is wrapped inside it. Design-wise, it's far from plain and features a teal-coloured microfibre inner with illustrations towards its top. The outside is made of a soft burgundy material that allows the Velcro corners to stick to it when wrapping up kit. As an extra touch, there are also great-looking real-leather accents on the corner of the Velcro tabs. At 29x29cm it's perfectly able to fit a medium DSLR, a large prime lens or a

Micro Four Thirds camera. I tried it out with a Canon EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens, which fits perfectly, as did an Olympus OM-D E-M5 Mark II.

Overall, the Zkin Mayura's design isn't to my personal taste, but its functionality is very good and I've not seen a better quality lens wrap available. Although it does have the drawback of being rather more expensive than the Domke or Tenba versions available, it's clear you're paying a premium for its quality and styling.

Callum McInerney-Riley



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Testbench
★★★★★

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Digital projectors

There's no better way of sharing your masterpieces with friends, relatives or club members than via a projector, but which one should you buy? **John Archer** puts five prime contenders through their paces

If you've taken a great photo, there are no doubt two things you wish you could do with it. First, you wish you could see it much bigger than how it appears on your computer screen. Second, you wish you could share your stunning

creation with as many other people as possible. Cue a digital projector. Modern projectors can deliver your photographs at sizes of 100in or more with a quality level that would have been unthinkable even just a couple of years ago – despite the fact that projector prices have

plummeted over the same period.

There's just one problem: picking the right projector is a minefield. For instance, there are numerous different types of projection technology, each with its own pros and cons. LCD projectors tend to excel in brightness and provide

more natural colours in dark areas, but lack contrast and can exhibit visible pixel structure. DLP projectors often deliver better contrast and less visible pixelation, but aren't as bright and can suffer with flashing colour stripes. Sony's SXR and JVC's D-ILA systems both deliver natural, contrast-rich images, but they're relatively expensive and struggle for brightness.

You also need to consider resolution. Today's digital cameras routinely boast enormous numbers of pixels, yet many

ANATOMY OF A DIGITAL PROJECTOR

WHEN choosing a projector, look for models with the connections (USB, PC VGA and/or HDMI) that suit the way you store your digital photographs. Also look for convenient set-up features like plenty of optical zoom and image shifting to help get the pictures in the right place on a screen or wall – especially if you're likely

to be using a projector in multiple venues.

When it comes to a projector's innards, look for models that offer a good balance between brightness and contrast (excessive brightness can make colours look unnatural), and provide plenty of colour adjustment including, ideally, an sRGB picture preset.

Control buttons

On-projector buttons are handy in case you lose or forget the remote.

Zoom/ focus wheels

These are often accessed through the top panels of small projectors.

Vents

These let out the heat produced by the projector's lamp, but can also leak light.

Lens

Remember that different lenses can deliver very different image throw distances.



affordable projectors only support native resolutions of 1,280x768 pixels – or even fewer. So aim for one with a 'full HD' resolution of 1,920x1,080 pixels, the highest resolution you can get without splurging £6,000 on a new Sony 'Ultra HD' projector.

A critical part of choosing any projector is the relationship between contrast and brightness. Often projectors push either brightness or contrast, rather than striving for a balance. Yet a balanced approach is what's needed to unlock the full quality

of your photographs, as brightness alone can leave your shots looking washed out.

It doesn't help that projector makers commonly overstate brightness and contrast specifications, but as a rule, unless you can easily black out your viewing room, look for brightness claims of between 2,000 and 3,200 Lumens, and contrast of 10,000:1 or more. A good contrast/brightness balance usually helps deliver natural colours, but it's worth looking for projectors that support the sRGB

colour standard used by most digital cameras.

Finally, there are set-up practicalities to consider. Make sure that your projector has the connections you want, be it a USB port for playback direct from camera or USB storage devices, a D-Sub PC port for playing slideshows from a computer, or (preferably) an HDMI port for direct connections between your camera and/or computer.

If you're going to be using the projector in lots of different locations, look for a portable

design and plenty of image size/ placement flexibility. For instance, consider whether you want a short or long-throw lens, and look for plenty of optical zoom (never use digital zoom systems, as these ruin picture quality). Also ensure that the projector provides either keystone correction or, even better, optical image shifting to help project the pictures without the edges appearing angled.

To make buying a projector easier, we've assembled a group of five projectors. Read on to find out which ones impressed us most.



Acer K750

- £920
- www.acer.co.uk

The Acer boasts a huge lamp life, but its pictures aren't perfect

THE ACER K750 is the first mainstream projector with a hybrid optical system that combines a DLP-style optical system with LED (rather than the usual UHP) lights for red and blue, and a blue laser/phosphor disc arrangement for green. This approach should improve lamp life, as well as boosting the brightness and reducing the cost of typical LED-based projection systems, without compromising user safety (reflecting the laser off the phosphor disc stops light output reaching harmful levels).

At first glance the hybrid system seems a success. Lamp life is rated at 20,000 hours versus 2,000–4,000 hours on a typical UHP projector; brightness is claimed to be 1,500 Lumens, which, while hardly exceptional by UHP standards, is extremely high for an LED solution; and at £920 the price is competitive.

Photographs look good on the K750 – sharpness and detailing are both exceptional, image contrast is surprisingly good for a projector with a laser element and the colour striping associated with DLP technology is fairly well suppressed. The K750's use of a fairly long-throw lens could limit image size in some locations, and the projector tends to infuse pictures with large amounts of green if you try to run it as brightly as you want to if there's any ambient light in the room.

Data file

Resolution
1,920x1,080 pixels
Projector type
Hybrid LED/laser/DLP
Claimed brightness
1,500 Lumens
Claimed contrast
100,000:1
Key connections
D-Sub PC port, two HDMI's, S-video, component video, RS232 control
Weight 4kg
Dimensions
321x231x87mm

Amateur Photographer Testbench
★★★



BenQ W1080ST+

- £730
- www.benq.co.uk

Exceptionally easy to set up, the BenQ is a good performer

THE 'ST' in the Ben Q W1080ST+'s name stands for 'short throw', as it can deliver big images even when very close to a wall or screen. With it you can enjoy your photographs at 100in across from a throw distance of just 1.5m. This is potentially a great help to photographers or clubs looking for a projector to take to multiple venues, as it needs so little space to work in. There's also a small (1.2x) zoom to play with and you can even add a wireless video connection system for £250.

There's no vertical image shifting, but the W1080ST+ does offer plenty of picture-calibration options, including full-colour management. It also offers a well-balanced combination of 2,200 Lumens of brightness and a 10,000:1 claimed contrast ratio that contributes to a strong all-round performance.

Particularly welcome after the Acer K750 is the impressive combination of dynamism and naturalism in its colours. The W1080ST+'s full HD pixel count also helps it deliver photographs crisply and cleanly without pixelation, and pictures are bright enough to enjoy in at least a little ambient light. The W1080ST+ isn't perfect. Dark photographs can look slightly grey where they should look black, and you can occasionally see DLP's colour striping. But overall this affordable projector's pros far outweigh its cons.

Data file

Resolution
1,920x1,080 pixels
Projector type DLP
Claimed brightness
2,200 Lumens
Claimed contrast
10,000:1
Key connections
D-Sub PC port, two HDMI's, component video, RS232, 12V trigger port
Weight 2.85kg
Dimensions
312x244 x104mm

Amateur Photographer Testbench
Best in Test
★★★★



Epson EH-TW570

- £550
- www.epson.co.uk

This Epson is inexpensive, but its picture quality is weak

THE LCD Epson EH-TW570 has two key attractions. First, it's not expensive, costing just £450 from some online outlets. Second, it's really bright. Its claimed 3,000 Lumens should enable it to produce images that still look punchy even in fairly bright rooms, so is ideal for shows in village halls and daytime living rooms.

The TW570 is extremely easy to set up too, thanks in particular to a nifty keystone correction 'slider' above the lens that quickly helps you get the edges of your photos straight even in strangely shaped rooms. There's a 1.2x zoom and its connections handily include a USB port as well as a single HDMI.

However, the TW570's resolution is only 1,280x800 pixels rather than full HD, and it doesn't sport many colour-management options. Its biggest problem, though, is its weak picture quality. Dark areas of photos look washed out and greyed over, while colours are wan, cartoonish and unrealistic. There can be a distracting glow around bright image elements, and quietly spoken folk should note that the TW570's fans make quite a racket.

If money's tight and you anticipate mostly using your projector in a light room, then the TW570's high brightness means it's not without appeal. But if your main motivation is seeing your photographs looking as good as possible, look elsewhere.

Data file

Resolution
1,280x800 pixels
Projector type LCD
Claimed brightness
3,000 Lumens
Claimed contrast
15,000:1
Key connections
D-Sub PC port, one HDMI, USB input, S-video input
Weight 2.4kg
Dimensions
297x234x77mm

Amateur Photographer Testbench
★★

'At first glance the K750's hybrid system seems a resounding success'

'BenQ's W1080ST+ gives impressive dynamism and naturalism in its colours'

'The TW570's high brightness means it's not wholly without appeal'



JVC DLA-X500R

- £3,999
- www.jvc.co.uk

The X500R is big, bulky, expensive – and utterly brilliant

THE BAD news first: as well as being too big to be portable, the JVC DLA-X500R is also much more expensive than any other projector here. But there's good reason to include it.

The thing is, some photographers or camera clubs want a projector for permanent installation in a dedicated darkened room – especially given that this invariably results in the best picture quality. And no installed projector delivers on this picture-quality promise better than the X500R.

The contrast from its proprietary D-ILA optical system is enormous, with a claimed 600,000:1 contrast ratio helping dark parts of your photographs look vastly more rich, natural and detailed than they do on any portable projector. Colours are vibrant, beautifully balanced and nuanced, while e-shift 4K technology uses two slightly offset full HD imaging devices to produce pictures with 4K levels of pixel density, intense detailing and no visible pixel structure.

The X500R's pictures aren't as bright (1,300 Lumens maximum) as those of the other projectors here, hence the need for a darkened room. But if you can overcome that practical hurdle and can afford the stiff cost of entry, this JVC can make your photographs look so good it feels as though you're seeing them for the very first time.

'With e-shift 4K technology the X500R produces pictures of 4K pixel density'



ViewSonic PJD7822HDL

- £500
- www.viewsonic.co.uk

Great value, but the ViewSonic suffers from picture striping

THERE'S much to like about the ViewSonic PJD7822HDL. For starters, it's inexpensive and immensely bright, claiming a huge 3,200 Lumens that should do well even in high levels of ambient light. Its DLP engine partners that with a contrast ratio of 15,000:1, raising hopes of decent colours and black tones.

The PJD7822HDL enjoys a full HD resolution too, while its connections include two HDMI's and, unusually, support for the MHL mobile phone connection platform, and a powered USB port to handle wireless HDMI video systems like Google Chromecast.

The projector has plenty of set-up flexibility too, and claims a wider colour range thanks to a new SuperColor DLP system. Its colours really are startlingly punchy, and the lamp's intense brightness ensures that the projector lives up to its promise of watchable results even in bright rooms. Photographs look pin-sharp and full of detail, and dark parts of the picture don't look greyed over and washed out.

However, there are two caveats. First, the PJD7822HDL can't accept remote-control signals from behind, which is daft, considering it's got a short-throw lens. Second, it suffers from DLP colour striping, especially with dark photos.

Still, overall if the BenQ W1080ST+ isn't bright enough for you, this ViewSonic is worth a try.

'The ViewSonic's colours are startlingly punchy... even in bright rooms'



Verdict

WHILE all five projectors tested here can do a very respectable job of enlarging your photographs to wall-filling proportions, it's still easy to organise them into a fairly clear-cut league table.

The Epson EH-TW570 is the least effective model. Yes, it's bright, inexpensive and easy to set up, but it also fails to deliver much contrast to accompany the brightness, leaving images looking unnatural and unbalanced. Overall, it feels more like a business presentation projector than a photographic display.

A step up from the TW570 is Acer's K750. Not having to worry about this model's lamp dying for 20,000 hours is a boon for heavy users, and Acer's projector handles darker shots nicely. But its use of a laser element to deliver green leads to some serious colour problems if you ask it to show anything bright – a problem if there's ambient light around.

The first projector in this group test you'd probably want to consider buying is ViewSonic's PJD7822HDL. Its innovative colour technology and high brightness lead to some colour striping with high-contrast photographs, but while this may distract some viewers, the projector's ability to deliver richly coloured, dynamic images even in bright rooms remains eye-catchingly impressive for such an affordable model.

If money's no object and you're looking for a projector to install permanently in a 'serious' projection room, the JVC X500R is deliriously good. Photographs look simply majestic on this high-end, movie-friendly machine, with peerless contrast, bold and subtly nuanced colours, and levels of detail beyond anything its rivals can manage. While the X500R is in a class of its own in performance terms, though, its hefty cost and bulk limit its market too much for it to win this group test.

Which leaves BenQ clambering onto the winner's podium. Its W1080ST+ treads a near-ideal line between price, features, flexibility and performance, making it great value and a cracking all-rounder when it comes to handling different venues and types of image content.

Data file

Resolution
1,920x1,080 pixels
(e-shifted to pseudo 4K)

Projector type D-ILA

Claimed brightness
1,300 Lumens

Claimed contrast
600,000:1

Key connections
Two HDMI's, RS-232C, LAN port, 12V trigger

Weight 14.7kg

Dimensions
455x472x179mm

Amateur Photographer Testbench
GOLD
★★★★★

Data file

Resolution
1,920x1,080 pixels

Projector type DLP

Claimed brightness
3,200 Lumens

Claimed contrast
15,000:1

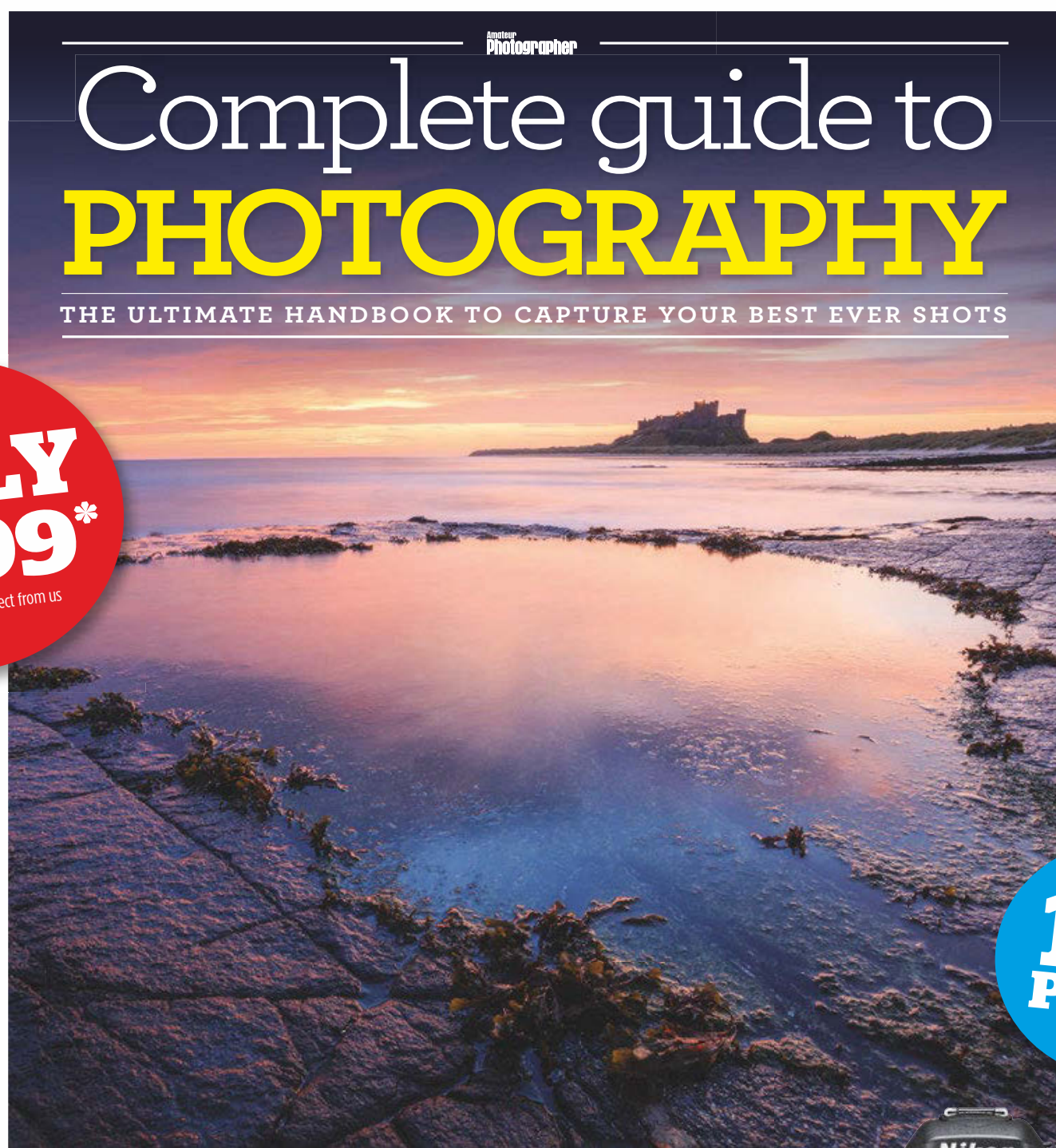
Key connections
Two HDMI's, powered USB, RS-232, S-Video port

Weight 2.1kg

Dimensions
268x221x84.4mm

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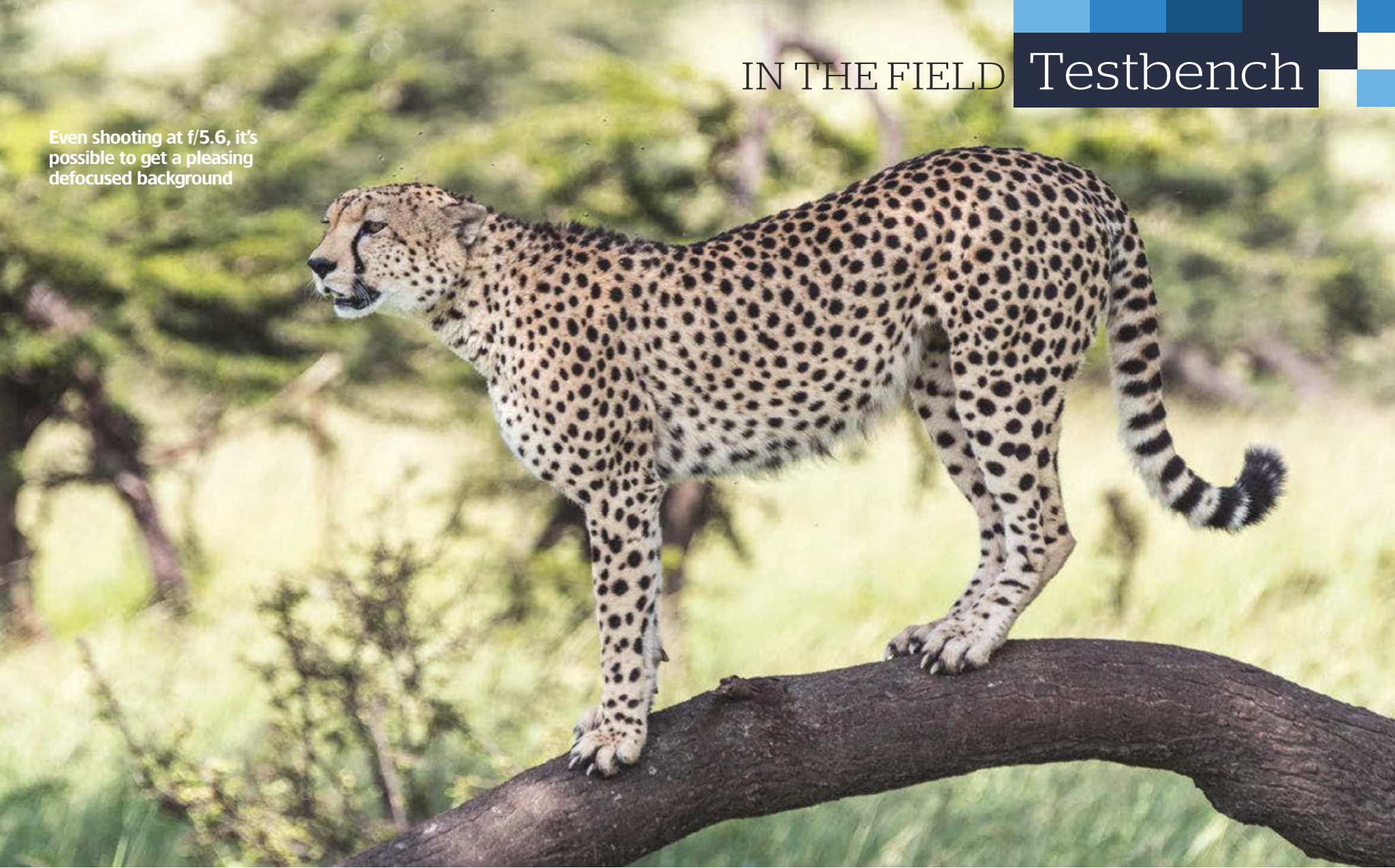
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Even shooting at f/5.6, it's possible to get a pleasing defocused background



Data file

Price £1,899
Mount Nikon F
Lens construction 20 elements in 12 groups
Diaphragm blades 9
Maximum aperture f/4.5-5.6
Minimum aperture f/32-40
Minimum focus 175cm
Filter size 77mm
Dimensions 95.5x203mm
Weight 1,570g

Into the wild

Is **Nikon's AF-S Nikkor 80-400mm f/4.5-5.6G ED VR** lens good enough for a once-in-a-lifetime photo safari, or did **Phil Hall** wish he'd packed something more exotic?



The Masai Mara Wildlife Reserve in the west of Kenya has rich vegetation and wide-open savannahs, which makes it one of the most prolific areas for wildlife in the world. It's a photographer's dream, and when I discovered I'd be experiencing this fabulous place first-hand alongside wildlife photographer Paul Goldstein on a dedicated photo safari, I knew I had to make the most of the opportunity.

Kit choice

Deciding on which camera to take was pretty easy, plumping quickly for the Nikon D810. However, deciding on my main lens proved much more difficult. My Nikkor

70-200mm f/2.8 wasn't going to have the reach, so my mind naturally drifted towards some of Nikon's exotic primes, like the 400mm f/2.8 and 500mm f/4. With prices running into five figures for these optics, there was no way I was going to be able to afford one, but for a fraction of the cost I could hire one for the week from a hire company like www.lensesforhire.co.uk.

There's no doubt that these are stunning optics that would be in their element out in the field, but having lugged a 400mm f/2.8 around with me at a premiership rugby match last year I know they're back-achingly heavy. I also had to consider transportation – I didn't want to take the chance of

checking my kit into the hold on the flight, so my gear had to meet Kenya Airways' hand-baggage allowance of measuring 55x25x35cm and weighing no more than 12kg. While there are some bags out there that would have done the job, getting all the other kit in as well as the 400mm would have been a struggle – even though the weight limit would easily have been met.

After a lot of agonising I decided to drop the idea of taking a large telephoto prime and look at other alternatives, which led me to having to choose between the 200-400mm f/4 and the 80-400mm f/4.5-5.6.

The 200-400mm is a cracking lens, but after a lot



‘Flying in over the Masai Mara, we caught a glimpse of what lay ahead, with giraffes and herds of elephants roaming below us’

of deliberation I settled on the 80-400mm. The AF-S Nikkor 80-400mm f/4.5-5.6G ED VR, to give it its full title, is the successor to the 13-year-old 80-400mm f/4.5-5.6D VR – Nikon’s first lens with Vibration Reduction. The wider focal range meant I could leave my trusty 70-200mm at home and happily pack just two bodies, the 80-400mm and 24-70mm f/2.8, into my Lowepro Vertex 200AW backpack without worrying about baggage restrictions. There was no denying the weight and versatility advantages offered by the lens, but had I put this at the expense of image quality, especially when combined with an unforgiving 36.3-million-pixel sensor?

First contact

Flying in over the Masai Mara in our little 13-seat Cessna Caravan from Nairobi, we caught a glimpse of what lay ahead, with giraffes and herds of elephants roaming below us in the bush. After being transported to our beautiful tented camp in the middle of the bush, we had just enough time to drop our bags and grab some lunch before heading out for an afternoon’s game drive – and my first chance to see how the

80-400mm lens stacks up.

With three of us to each Toyota Land Cruiser, along with our guide/driver, we left the camp. My bag was down at my feet with the D810 and 80-400mm ready to go. I’d set my camera up with back-button focus – something I started doing a couple of years ago and it’s been a revelation. Rather than relying on focusing with the shutter button (which I’ve deactivated for AF and only triggers the shutter), I press my thumb down on the AF-ON button at the rear of the D810. With continuous AF set, I find it much easier to track a moving subject. It also means I don’t have to mess around switching to single AF for static subjects – I can focus on my subject, lift my thumb off the AF-ON button and recompose before firing the shutter. I chose the centre AF point, but to assist with moving subjects I opted for dynamic-area AF with nine points, so if my subject were to move out of the centre AF point the surrounding eight would be able to pick it up. As for the lens, I flicked the focus-limit switch over to ∞-6m from full to speed up AF acquirement.

With our Land Cruisers equipped with plenty of beanbags to rest lenses on, monopods

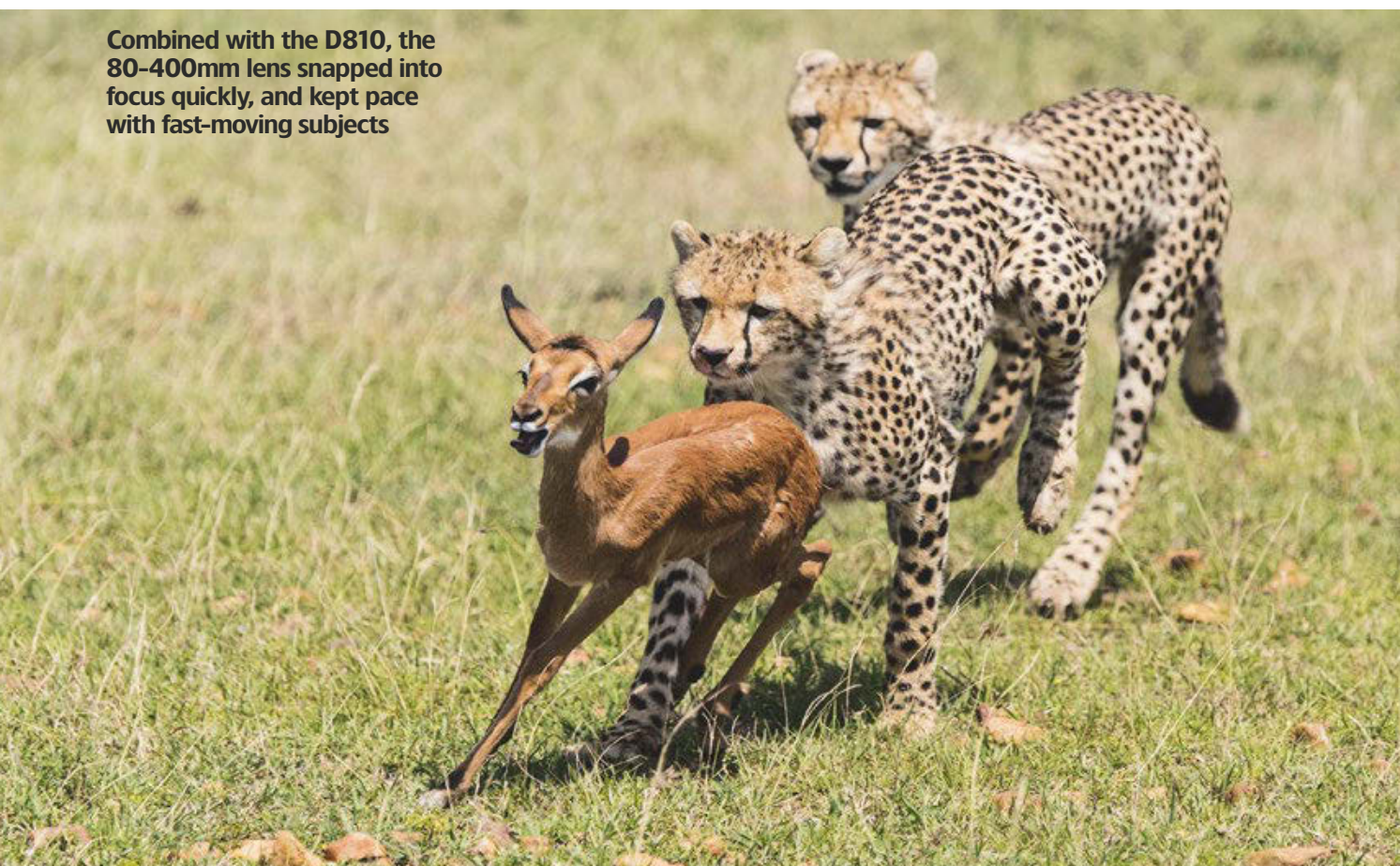


The size of the 80-400mm meant I could travel relatively light

weren’t necessary (plus they’d get in the way). I opted to leave the VR mode set to normal, with active coming into play only if we shot from the Land Cruiser as it moved across the bush.

At about 3pm our Land Cruiser came to a halt 15m away from a lone tree where a lioness had decided to position herself halfway up – quite an unusual sight, by all accounts, but our guide told us

Combined with the D810, the 80-400mm lens snapped into focus quickly, and kept pace with fast-moving subjects



When you consider that the lens provides a 5x focal range, image quality is very good and delivers sharp results



My first encounter with a big cat on the Masai Mara and my first chance to put the 80-400mm through its paces. It didn't disappoint

that she'd done this to get away from the swarms of flies buzzing around the reserve. The rest of the pride didn't seem as fussed by the insects, so were lounging on the floor beneath her, having

fed earlier in the day.

Standing in the Land Cruiser, I raised the D810 to my eye, twisting the zoom ring to 330mm to fill the frame with the lioness. A light touch of the AF-ON button

saw the viewfinder snap into focus and I fired off a few shots. The results weren't going to win any awards with the light as it was, but it was my first taste of shooting big cats on the Mara. It also gave me the chance to review the results from the lens and I was pleased (or should that be relieved?) to see that the images appeared nice and sharp – at least on the D810's rear screen.

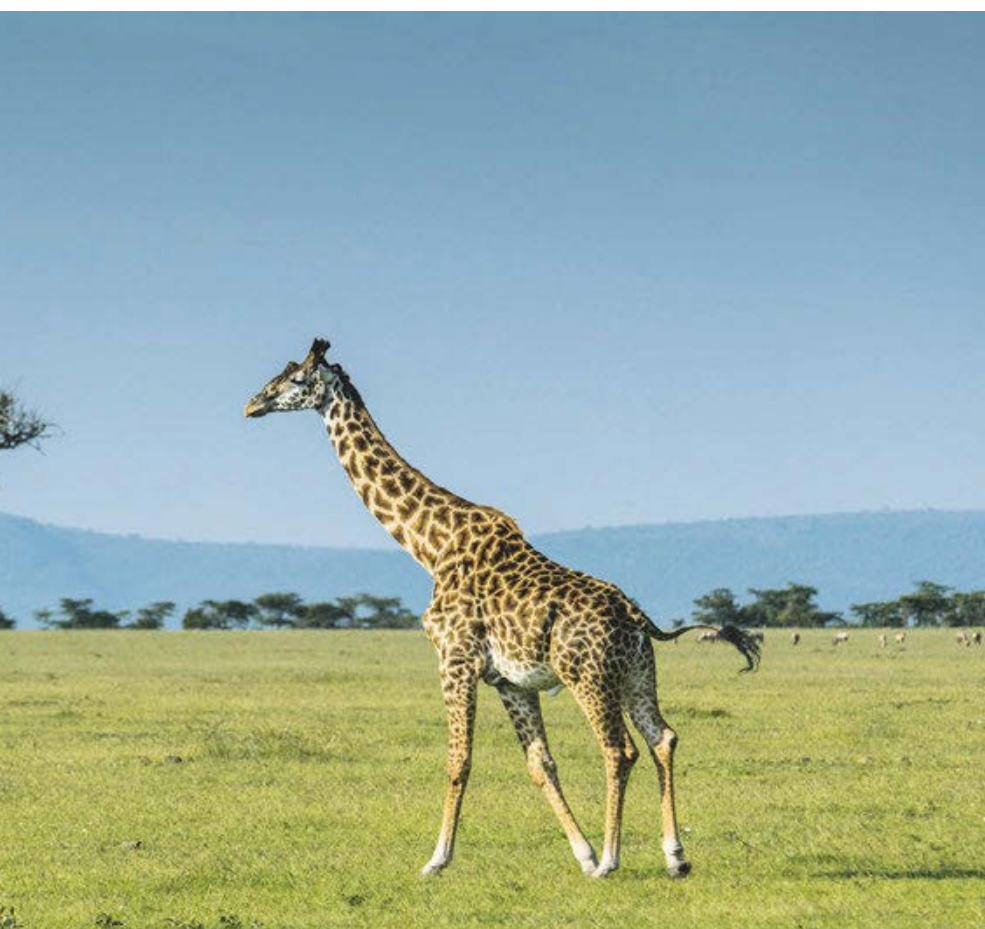
Testing conditions

With a storm approaching we continued on our game drive, but before long the heavens opened. Since our Land Cruiser was open-sided and sported two large roof hatches, we – and our kit – got soaked before we had time to pull the covers over. Thankfully, though, the 80-400mm has a rubber gasket seal on the mount for added protection, and appeared to be unscathed (although Nikon doesn't make any claims to it being fully weather-sealed). Constructed from a combination of high-quality plastics and metal, the 80-400mm also feels nicely put together and tips the scales at just under 1.6kg. If I'm being picky,

though, it doesn't have quite the same bombproof feel as my 70-200mm f/2.8.

Over the next three days I really had a chance to put the 80-400mm through its paces. The autofocus didn't let me down at all. Even when juvenile cheetah cubs were chasing down an impala fawn, it didn't miss a beat and tracked the fast-moving subjects with incredible precision. It also did a fantastic job in low-light conditions – early starts and late finishes were a common theme each day, and the D810 and 80-400mm combination meant I didn't experience any hunting.

While Paul encouraged us to use the beanbags for support, the 80-400mm was easy to handhold and, to be honest, I preferred the freedom it offered. While I could quickly move position as the action unfolded in front of me, it also meant that my ability to zoom through the focal range wasn't impeded by resting the lens on the bag. While I aimed to shoot at shutter speeds above 1/500sec on most occasions, there were times when I had to rely on the 80-400mm's VR system to counteract any of my



The focus worked extremely well here, ignoring the long grass in the foreground to lock on to the lion



movement as the light dropped and I was forced to extend the shutter speed. There's no disputing the 4-stop improvement it offers – a massive improvement on the 2 stops delivered by the original lens – but while it's possible to shoot as low as 1/25sec and still achieve sharp results, you have to be mindful that movement from your subject could become an issue.

Image quality

Once back at camp in the evenings, before a well-earned beer or glass of wine around the camp fire, I had a chance to review my images on a larger screen and have a tinker with them in Lightroom. Wide-open at 200mm the lens does exhibit a bit of fall-off in edge sharpness, but stopped down a stop or two images become edge-to-edge sharp. At 400mm the edge sharpness does suffer a little more, but not so much that it becomes detrimental to the image, and the centre is pin-sharp. Vignetting is a slight issue when shooting with the lens wide-open through the focal range, though, so I found it worthwhile to select the relevant lens profile in Lightroom to correct

The combination of D810 and 80-400mm worked really well, allowing me to crop if necessary



for it. This also revealed very minor pin-cushion distortion at higher focal lengths, but again, this is easily remedied.

Downsides

There's not much to fault on the 80-400mm lens, but there are a couple of things I'd like to see refined. First, and it has to be said that I didn't have any need for it while I was shooting, the tripod collar appears too small for the size of the lens it needs to support. I'd also like to see Nikon take a leaf out of Canon's book when it comes to the lens hood. While shooting alongside photographers

who had Canon's latest 100-400mm, I noticed they could happily adjust the position of their polarising filter through a little sliding opening on their lens hood, whereas I either had to leave the hood off if I wanted to use a polariser and work quickly (it would have been a bit impractical to keep attaching and detaching the hood), or not bother with the filter at all. To be fair, though, that's not unique to the 80-400mm.

Final thoughts

While there's no question that the pricier optics in Nikon's range would have delivered the goods,

the perfect blend of performance and size makes the 80-400mm lens hard not to like. With space at a premium, it didn't take up masses of room in my bag or in the back of the Land Cruiser, while its relatively compact form factor meant I could lug it around and position it quickly.

I've got no issues with the AF, either, as it's fast and accurate, performing well in low light and backlit conditions, while the tracking is quick enough to ensure that I didn't miss any of the action. Combine that with the excellent VR system, smooth handling and solid finish, and there's a lot to like.

As far as image quality goes, I was pleasantly surprised. The images weren't perfect, but considering the lens covers a 5x zoom range it's very impressive, especially when you weigh up its cost compared to the other alternatives.

So, after agonising about which long lens to take with me before I set off, I didn't regret my choice. In fact, I should probably have worried more about the second lens I took, as I found the 24-70mm not quite wide enough for those large skies and wished I'd packed a 16-35mm instead.



- 1) KOOD uses small untoughend, thick Pilkington Optical Glass Mold's to produce the highest possible optically flat resin Filters without curvature to ensure infinity focus
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- 4) All filters packed in between card, in wallets which allow no movement or dust
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- A Filter Holder Hood
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- A Adapter Ring 38.1mm
- A Adapter Ring 40.5mm
- A Adapter Ring 46mm
- A Adapter Ring 49mm
- A Adapter Ring 52mm
- A Adapter Ring 55mm
- A Adapter Ring 58mm
- A Adapter Ring 62mm

GRADIENTS

- 0.3 ND Gradient soft
- Dark Grey tp
- 0.6 ND Gradient Soft
- .03 ND gradient Hard Cut
- .06 ND Gradient Hard Cut
- .09 ND Gradient Soft
- .09 ND Gradient Hard Cut
- ND8 Grad 3 Stops
- ND8 Grad Hard Cut
- Light Blue Graduated
- Dark Blue Graduated
- Cool Blue Gradient
- Light Green Graduated
- Dark Green Graduated
- Light Mauve Graduated
- Dark Mauve Graduated
- Light Red Graduated
- Dark Red Graduated
- Light Tobacco Graduated
- Dark Tobacco Graduated
- Light Fog Graduated
- Strong Fog Graduated
- Light Yellow Graduated
- Dark Yellow Graduated
- Light Sunset Graduated
- Dark Sunset Graduated



POLARIZERS

- Linear Polariser Filter
- Circular Polariser Filter

NEUTRAL DENSITY

- Neutral Density 2
- Neutral Density 4
- Neutral Density 8

STARS AND DIFFRACTIONS

- Star x 4
- Star x 6
- Star x 6 with centre spot
- Star x 8
- Diffraction 2x
- Diffraction 36x
- Diffraction 4x
- Diffraction Star 4
- Diffraction Star 8
- Diffraction Square
- Diffraction Halo



CLOSE UP'S

- Close Up 1
- Close Up 2
- Close Up 4
- Split Field

MULTI IMAGE AND SPEED

- Multi Image 3
- Multi Image 5
- Multi Image 7
- Speed



COLOURS

- 20 x Polyester colour set
- Yellow
- Orange
- Green
- Red
- Sepia
- Sky

CONVERSION

- 20 x Wratten polyesters set
- 80A
- 80B
- 80C
- 81A
- 81B
- 81C
- 82A
- 82B
- 82C
- 85A
- 85B
- 85C
- FLB
- FLD
- FLW



DOUBLE EXPOSURE AND MASKS

- A Double Exposure
- A Double Mask 1
- A Double Mask 2
- A PSF



DIFFUSERS AND FOGS

- A light Diffuser
- A Strong Diffuser
- A Fog 1
- A Fog 2



NETS

- Net Blue
- Net Grey
- Net Green
- Net Orange
- Net Red
- Net Violet
- Net White



SPOTS

- Oval Spot Blue
- Oval Spot Clear
- Oval Spot Grey
- Oval Spot Red
- Oval Spot White
- Spot Blue
- Spot Clear
- Spot Grey
- Spot Green
- Spot Orange
- Spot Red
- Spot Violet
- Spot White
- Wide Spot Blue
- Wide Spot Clear
- Wide Spot Grey
- Wide Spot Green
- Wide Spot Orange
- Wide Spot Red
- Wide Spot Violet
- Wide Spot White



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- P Adapter Ring 49mm
- P Adapter Ring 52mm
- P Adapter Ring 55mm
- P Adapter Ring 58mm
- P Adapter Ring 62mm
- P Adapter Ring 67mm
- P Adapter Ring 72mm
- P Adapter Ring 77mm
- P Adapter Ring 82mm



GRADIENTS

- Alter Grey Gradients to
- .03 ND Gradient Soft
- .03 ND gradient Hard Cut
- .06 ND Gradient Soft
- .06 ND Gradient Hard Cut
- .09 ND Gradient Soft
- .09 ND Gradient Hard Cut
- Dark Grey Graduated Hard Edge
- GG4 ND8 3 stop Grad
- GG4 ND8 3 Stop grad Hard Edge
- Light Blue Graduated
- Dark Blue Graduated
- Cool Blue Graduated

- Light Green Graduated
- Dark Green Graduated
- Light Grey Graduated
- Light Mauve Graduated
- Dark Mauve Graduated
- Light Red Graduated
- Dark Red Graduated
- Light Tobacco Graduated
- Dark tobacco Graduated
- Light Yellow Graduated
- Dark Yellow Graduated
- Light Sunset Graduated
- Dark Sunset Graduated



POLARIZERS

- Linear Polariser
- Circular Polariser

NEUTRAL DENSITY

- ND400 9 Stops (Japanese Glass) available Round (Back Slot) Square (for use with PL, star etc)
- ND16 4 Stops (Japanese Glass)
- Neutral Density x2
- Neutral Density x4
- Neutral Density x8
- Neutral Density x8 (Glass)

INFRA RED 720 P FILTER

- Infra Red 720 Optical Glass

STARS AND DIFFRACTIONS

- Starburst x4
- Starburst x6
- Starburst x8
- Diffraction 2x
- Diffraction 36x
- Diffraction Double Halo
- Diffraction Halo
- Diffraction 4x Star
- Diffraction Filter DS8
- Diffraction Square



CLOSE UP FILTERS

- Close up +1
- Close Up +2
- Close Up +4
- Split Field



COLOURS

- Yellow
- Orange
- Green
- Red
- Skylight
- Sepia

DIFFUSERS AND FOGS

- Light Diffuser
- Strong Diffuser
- Light Fog
- Strong Fog

CONVERSION FILTERS

- 80A
- 80B
- 80C
- 81A
- 81B
- 81C
- 82A
- 82B
- 82C
- 85A
- 85B
- 85C
- FLD
- FLW
- FLB



DOUBLE EXPOSURE

Double Exposure Solar Eclipse Filter SPOTS

- Blue Clear Spot
- Clear Spot
- Green Clear Centre Spot
- Grey Clear Spot
- Orange Clear Spot
- Clear Oval Spot
- Grey Oval Spot
- White Oval Spot
- Red Clear Spot
- Violet Clear Spot
- White Clear Spot



100 MM FILTERS GRADIENTS 100 X 125MM

- Light Grey Graduated
- Dark Grey Graduated
- Light Grey Hard Edge
- Dark Grey Hard Edge
- ND 8 three stop Geads
- ND 8 three srtop hard edge Grad
- Light Blue Graduated
- Dark Blue Graduated
- Light Green Graduated
- Dark Green Graduated
- Light Tobacco Graduated
- Dark tobacco Graduated
- Light Sunset Graduated
- Dark Sunset Graduated



NEUTRAL DENSITY

- Neutral Density 2
- Neutral Density 4

DIFFUSERS AND FOGS

- Diffuser Light
- Diffuser Strong
- Fog 1
- Fog 2



COLOURS

- Yellow
- Orange
- Red
- Green
- Sepia
- Skylight

CONVERSION FILTERS

- 80A
- 80B
- 80C
- 81A
- 81B
- 81C
- 82A
- 82B
- 82C
- 85A
- 85B
- 85C
- FLB

- Spot Clear
- Spot Oval
- Spot White



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● EXPERT ADVICE ● TIPS ● TRICKS ● HACKS ● KNOW-HOW

Old Nikon lens

Q A friend recently lent me an old Nikon AF Nikkor 35mm f/2D lens to try on my Nikon D3100, but for the life of me I can't get it to focus or take pictures. I thought all F-mount lenses should be usable on my camera, so what am I doing wrong?

Paul Clatterfield

A This lens should be usable on your camera, but with some limitations. First, it won't autofocus at all, as it requires the camera to have a built-in focus motor and sadly your D3100 doesn't have one so you'll have to focus manually. You can use the 'digital rangefinder' in the camera's viewfinder to check focus. The green arrows indicate the direction to turn the focus ring, and the green dot lights up when the subject is in focus.

Second, and somewhat counter-intuitively, you have to set the aperture from the camera body, not using the aperture ring itself. To shoot with the lens, you'll first need to set the aperture ring to f/22 – this allows the camera to take control of the aperture setting. At this point the lens should work exactly as though you were using a modern



Buying an APS-C body is a viable option for wildlife photographers who would like extra reach in telephoto shooting

© CALUM MCINERNEY-ARLEY

Crop sensors for wildlife

Q As an avid Canon full-frame camera user with a passion for wildlife photography, I've been considering a longer lens than my EF 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6L IS USM. Unfortunately, the ones I am looking at are a bit out of my price range, so I considered a teleconverter. However, I understand that autofocus will not work with my lens, and I'd lose 1 stop of light for the 1.4x converter and 2 stops of light for the 2x converter.

Therefore, is it not prudent to purchase a crop-sensor body like the EOS 7D? With the 1.6x crop, this would make my 100-400mm into a 160-640mm while still keeping the f/4.5-5.6 aperture range. Yet a crop sensor body is cheaper than a long telephoto

lens, and I'd also end up with a second body. What do you think? **G Rayner**

A Your reasoning is entirely sound here. If you're a full-frame user looking to get a bit of extra reach for telephoto shooting, then buying an APS-C body is an eminently sensible option. It's more expensive than getting a teleconverter to use with your full-frame camera, but AF will continue to work fully, and indeed the extra spread of focus points across the frame typically provided by cameras like the EOS 7D should be beneficial for keeping erratically moving animals in your sights. Also, because you're not adding any extra glass to introduce additional aberrations, images should turn out a little sharper.

Your other option would be to splash out for one of the latest 150-600mm lenses from Tamron or Sigma, but they're relatively big and heavy and will cost the best part of £1,000. **Andy Westlake**



Older Nikkor lenses may require you to focus and set exposure manually

G-type design.

If you do get a taste for working with manual Nikkors, it's worth knowing that even older AI-type designs won't couple with the metering on your camera, so you have to switch to

manual mode and judge the exposure yourself. In this case, your best bet is to take a test shot or two and adjust your exposure based on the playback image and histogram. **Andy Westlake**



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Technical Support

Compatible cable release

Q I am searching for a release cable that's compatible with my Fujifilm FinePix SL260. Which release cable will I need?

Leah Jones

A I've checked up on this, and it appears that like many fixed-lens compacts your camera doesn't have any kind of connector for a cable release.

This leaves you with two options. You could use a universal cable release, of the type that has a Velcro strap that wraps around the camera's handgrip, allowing the use of an old-fashioned mechanical release to press the shutter. These can be

found in specialist camera shops and online, for example on Amazon for around £13 (www.amazon.co.uk/Hama-Cable-Release-Digital-Cameras/dp/B000CDGWDE).

Alternatively, depending on what you're trying to do, you can use the self-timer set to a two-second delay. If you're shooting long exposures on a tripod, for example, this gives sufficient time for any vibrations from pressing the

A universal cable release makes use of a mechanical release to press the shutter



shutter-release button to die away before the exposure starts. The big advantage of this method is that it doesn't cost you anything.

Andy Westlake

HOW IT WORKS

I am your

Lithium-ion battery

YOU TAKE me for granted until I stop working, but I'm one of the most important parts of your camera. If the lens is its eye and the processor is its brain, I am its heart. I am a rechargeable lithium-ion (Li-ion) battery, and I provide the energy it needs to keep on taking pictures.

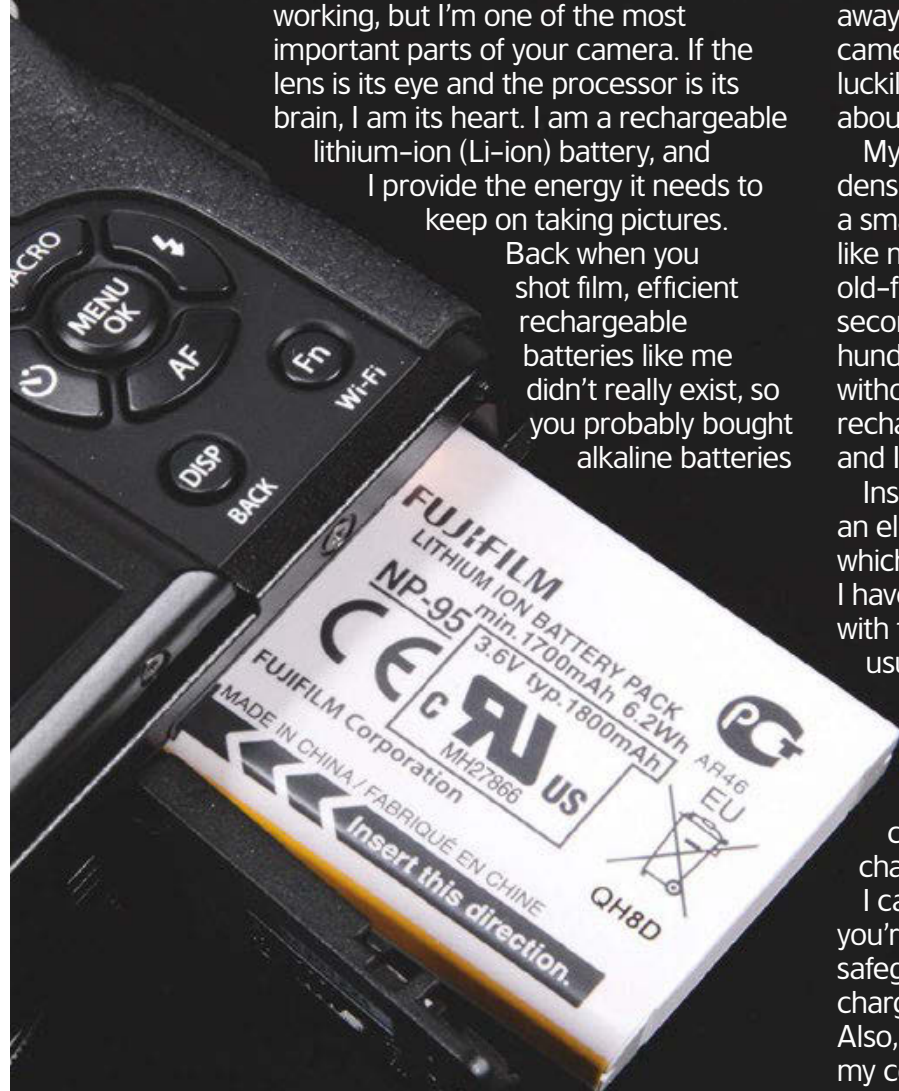
Back when you shot film, efficient rechargeable batteries like me didn't really exist, so you probably bought alkaline batteries

that lasted a few rolls, then threw them away when they ran out. But early digital cameras needed much more power, and luckily my kind started getting good at about the same time.

My first big advantage is high energy density. I can store a lot of power in a small volume, so camera designers like me as I save space compared to old-fashioned cylindrical batteries. My second is that I can be recharged hundreds, if not thousands of times without wearing out. So you can recharge me every day for years and I'll still keep going.

Inside me I have one or two cells, with an electrolyte made of lithium salts, which is where my name comes from. If I have one cell my voltage is 3.7V, and with two cells it's 7.4V. Alongside the usual positive and negative contacts, I often have extra ones that allow the camera to communicate with a microchip inside me, which can indicate whether I'm still in good condition, and exactly how much charge I have left.

I can be a bit temperamental while you're charging me up, though, so safeguards have to be built into my charger to make sure I don't explode. Also, make sure you don't short-circuit my contacts when I'm fully charged, as I might catch fire. But if you look after me well, I'll help you keep on taking pictures for many years to come.



BLAST FROM THE PAST

Contessa LK and LKE

Ivor Matanle recalls a compact 35mm camera from Zeiss Ikon

LAUNCHED 1962/63 (different specifications were announced at different times)

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THE ZEISS Ikon Contessa LK (with no rangefinder) and the coupled-rangefinder version, the Contessa LKE, were top-quality compact 35mm cameras of the 1960s, each with a Carl Zeiss Jena 50mm f/2.8 Tessar lens, a Pronto-LK shutter (Contessa LK) or Prontor 500 LK (Contessa LKE), bright-line viewfinder and a built-in selenium-cell exposure meter with viewfinder read-out. Both models appeared first with a centralised accessory shoe on the top-plates (1962/63), then later as versions with a hotshoe offset to one end of the top-plate (1966). I used a Contessa LKE extensively for my book *Collecting and Using Classic Cameras* in the mid-1980s, and found it to be an excellent device capable of first-class results. The same will still be true now, if the camera is in good order.

What's good Superb lens and image quality. Excellent Zeiss Ikon engineering quality.

What's bad Tendency to develop stiff focusing and shutter problems in old age, but well worth repairs if you plan to use it.





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My life in cameras

Landscape photographer Adam Burton recalls the cameras that have shaped his photographic life

Adam Burton



Adam Burton is one of the UK's leading landscape photographers. Completely self-taught, he started shooting landscapes seriously in 2002. Since then, he has produced five books of his photographs and

had images published on the covers of hundreds of books and magazines. To see his work, visit www.adamburtonphotography.com.

2002 Pentax MZ-7

The Pentax MZ-7 was my first SLR. I'm not a technical photographer and up to that point I'd used only compacts as I didn't feel I needed an SLR. I used the MZ-7 on automatic mode for the first year. The only thing that got me using the camera properly was the free roll of transparency film on



the cover of AP. I used it to experiment with controlling shutter speed and aperture. I was blown away by the results and from that point my photography really took off.

2005 Canon EOS 20D

My first digital camera was the EOS 20D. I was a bit slow to adopt digital, because I was happy shooting with slide film. I really struggled at first to get used to it and my processing left a lot to be desired! However, once I became familiar with the camera and processing, digital was liberating for me. As I was submitting work regularly to magazines and other clients, there were huge advantages to working digitally.



2006 Canon EOS 5D

The EOS 5D was a ground-breaking camera at the time, as it combined a full-frame sensor with a compact body. The 12.8MP sensor offered a big increase in quality on my previous camera. It also had a big, bright viewfinder, unlike the small and dark one on the 20D, and I thoroughly enjoyed using it.

This was the camera I was shooting with as I began to develop my reputation as a landscape photographer.



2008 Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III

I quickly progressed to the top of the Canon range and bought my EOS-1Ds Mark III when I turned professional. My images were being marketed through libraries for large-format use, so I felt I needed the EOS-1Ds's

larger sensor to be able to compete with other professionals. After initially disregarding the live view function, I realised its amazing potential for precise manual focusing and began using it for every photo. It was a fantastic camera.



2012 Nikon D800E

I had no intention of changing brands, but when Canon replaced the 21.1MP EOS-1Ds Mark III with the 18.1MP EOS-1D X, I figured it was time for a change. I purchased the Nikon D800E with a 36.3MP sensor. The camera has its issues, one of which is the noisy and blurry live view, but that aside it's the best camera I've ever used. It produces big, clean, beautiful files with amazing dynamic range. I'm very happy with Nikon for now.



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THE VIDEO MODE

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ALMOST every new digital camera has the ability to record video footage, but for many photographers the transition from stills to moving images can be a daunting one. What exactly do all those recording formats mean? How do you set up the shutter speed for video? How do you focus the lens? What about recording sound? There are so many questions, and all of them need answering.

Thankfully, help is at hand from The Video Mode, a new website from the publishers of *Amateur Photographer* and *What Digital Camera*. The site offers comprehensive advice on shooting video – with tips ranging from the basics you need to know when starting out, to more advanced questions on shooting raw video footage. Plus, it'll feature insights and techniques from leading videographers, as well as camera and equipment reviews. Basically, The Video Mode has everything you need to help you get started recording video with your digital camera.

Shutter speeds and ND filters

When shooting stills, you can shoot at any shutter speed you like – or at least whatever shutter speed is appropriate for the effect you're aiming for and the environment you're working in. You can capture images right up to 1/8,000sec (if your camera has that function) right down to long exposures lasting a number of seconds. However, with video you're limited to a single shutter speed while recording, and that shutter speed depends on the frame rate you're shooting at. Most of the time this will be either 24 or 25 frames per second (fps), and because of the '180° shutter-angle rule', which goes back to shooting on film, your shutter speed should be double your frame rate.

For example, when shooting at 25fps, your shutter speed should be 1/50sec. If your

camera can shoot at 50 or 60fps, your shutter speed should be 1/100sec or 1/125sec. The reason for implementing this 180° rule is that it helps to record video that contains natural movement.

If the shutter speed is too slow you'll get blurred movement, while if you shoot at a shutter speed that's too high the people's movements in your scene will look robotic or as if they were recorded in stop motion. Sticking to the 180° rule will give you the most natural movement.

Having to stick with a fixed shutter speed can feel limiting for those of us who are experienced in stills photography. If you're outdoors shooting at 1/50sec, at your lowest ISO and you want to use a wide aperture, you'll often find that the scene is overexposed. The natural tendency for a photographer is to increase the shutter speed, but because we can't do that when shooting video we instead have to use ND filters to reduce the amount of light entering through the lens.

For more about using ND

ND filters reduce light entering the lens, when you can't increase shutter speeds



filters with video, visit **www.thevideomode.com/filters**

Recording sound

Unless you're planning to record a silent movie, audio recording and quality are some of the most vital components in the video-making process. No matter how good your pictures are, weak audio will make your efforts seem amateurish. In fact, great audio can disguise poor visuals.

Most cameras have a tiny microphone built in and these are fine for home videos and candid video recording, but built-in microphones aren't much good if you want to produce videos of a high standard.

Built-in mics are small and omnidirectional, which means they pick up sound from all around them. They're also very susceptible to the noise from wind. To improve the quality of



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your audio, it's best to use external microphone options, and to use a good pair of headphones to monitor the sound you're recording. There are many different types of microphones available, and which you use will depend on what you are recording.

Watch our video



External microphones can help improve your sound quality

demonstration of the different microphones that are available for recording audio at www.thevideomode.com/audio

Keep it steady

A wobbly camera is annoying – not to mention amateurish – to watch, so keep the camera steady while filming. Use a tripod or monopod for shots that are fixed, while for roaming shots try to shorten the camera strap and pull it taut against the back of your neck, or shorten a monopod and keep it attached to act as a counterweight.

Although image stabilisation does a satisfactory job in some cameras and lenses, a device specifically designed to keep footage smooth and steady is a far better option. These can range in price from £20 shoulder rigs or stabilisation devices to equipments that costs thousands of pounds.

To read our reviews of video accessories, visit www.thevideomode.com/equipment



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To coincide with the launch of The Video Mode website, we're pleased to announce our new Amateur Filmmaker of the Year (AFOY) competition. AFOY challenges you to get creative with your filmmaking, and gives you the opportunity to win some fantastic prizes worth £10,000 in total. The competition is split into three rounds, each with its unique theme: Nature, Time and Love (see below).

Theme	Opens	Closes
Round One: Nature	1 Aug	30 Sep
Round Two: Time	1 Oct	31 Dec
Round Three: Love	1 Jan	28 Feb

The overall winner will be announced in April 2016

For your chance to win some fantastic prizes worth more than £10,000, and details of how to enter, visit www.thevideomode.com/afoy

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CONTAX TLA 140 FLASH FOR G1/G2.....	MINTCASED £65.00
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CONTAX GDI DATABASE FOR CONTAX T3.....	MINT-BOXED £69.00
CONTAX 167MT BODY.....	MINT-BOXED £75.00
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CONTAX 50MM F1.7 MM LENS.....	MINTBOXED £99.00
CONTAX 300MM F4 TELE TESSAR AE.....	MINT- £295.00
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LEICA 135MM F4.5 HEKTOR + HOOD M MOUNT.....	EXC++ £99.00
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NIKON 14 - 24MM F2.8 "G" IF-ED AF-S LATEST.....	MINTBOXED £1,175.00
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NIKON 16 - 85MM F3.5/5.6 "G" DX ED AF-S VR.....	MINTCASED £289.00
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NIKON 24 - 70MM F2.8 "G" IF- ED AF-S.....	MINTBOXED AS NEW \$399.00
NIKON 24 - 120MM F4 "G" ED AF-S VR LATEST MODEL.....	MINTBOXED AS NEW £375.00
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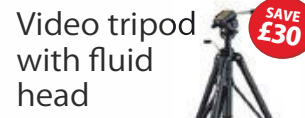
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20.03
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8.0 fps
4K Video

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Black or Silver

16.1
megapixels
10.0 fps
1080p
movie mode

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10.0 fps

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megapixels
8.3 fps
Full HD
movie mode

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megapixels
0 fps
1080p
movie mode

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CUSTOMER REVIEW: EOS 70D + 18-135mm IS STM

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Adam – Portsmouth

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CUSTOMER REVIEW: EOS 1D X Digital SLR Camera Body

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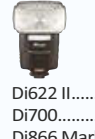
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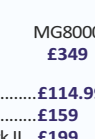


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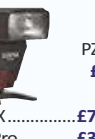


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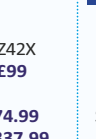


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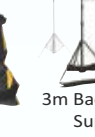


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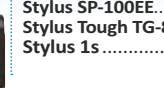
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CLi8 Pixma Pro 9000 Originals: Set of 8 £74.99 Colours 14ml each £9.99 Compatibles: Set of 8 £27.99 Colours 14ml each £3.99		No.26 Polar Bear Inks Originals: No.26 Set of 4 £29.99 No.26 Black 6.2ml £8.99 No.26 Colours 4.5ml each £7.99 No.26XL Set of 4 £49.99 No.26XL Black 12.1ml £14.99 No.26XL Colours 9.7ml each £13.99 Compatibles: No.26 Set of 4 £14.99 No.26 Black 10ml £3.99 No.26 Colours 7ml each £3.99	
PGi9 Pixma Pro 9500 Originals: Set of 10 £84.99 Colours 14ml each £8.99 Compatibles: Set of 10 £44.99 Colours 14ml each £4.99		T0481-T0486 Seahorse Inks Originals: Set of 6 £69.99 Colours 13ml each £16.99 Compatibles: Set of 6 £19.99 Colours 13ml each £3.99	
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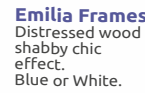
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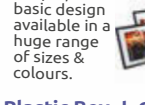
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T0791-T0796 Owl Inks Originals: Set of 6 £72.99 Colours 11.1ml each £12.99 Compatibles: Set of 6 £19.99 Colours 11.1ml each £3.99	Compatibles: No.15 Black 46ml £4.99 No.21 Black 10ml £7.99 No.22 Colour 21ml £11.99 No.45 Black 45ml £4.99 No.56 Black 24ml £9.99 No.57 Colour 24ml £12.99 No.78 Colour 36ml £9.99 No.110 Colour 12ml £10.99 No.300XL Black 18ml £14.99 No.300XL Colour 18ml £16.99 No.301XL Black 15ml £14.99 No.301XL Colour 18ml £16.99 No.337 Black 21ml £10.99 No.338 Black 21ml £10.99 No.339 Black 34ml £12.99 No.343 Colour 21ml £12.99 No.344 Colour 21ml £14.99 No.348 Photo 21ml £12.99 No.350XL Black 30ml £14.99 No.351XL Colour 20ml £16.99 No.363 Black 20ml £6.99 No.363 Colours 6ml each £4.99 No.363 SET OF 6 £24.99 No.364 Black 10ml £4.99 No.364 Colours 5ml each £3.99 No.364 SET OF 4 £15.99 No.364XL Black 18ml £8.99 No.364XL Colours 11ml each £7.99 No.364XL SET OF 4 £31.99 No.920XL SET OF 4 £19.99 No.932XL SET OF 4 £29.99 No.940XL SET OF 4 £29.99 No.950XL SET OF 4 £29.99
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Polaroid Back£39
WLF£69
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Angle viewfinder E.....£129
Winder early£79
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Tripod adapter E£39
Winder early£49
Metz SCA 386£49

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150 F3.5 S£79
150 F4 PS£149/199
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SQAI Polaroid back...£79
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SQA 120 RFH£49
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1D MKIV body£1299
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5D MKII body box...£999
5D MKI body box...£399
70D body box£599
60D body£399
50D body box£299
40D body£199
30D body box£169
700D body box£349
600D body box£299
550D body box£249
450D body£179
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350D body£99
300D body£79
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BG-E2 box£39
BG-E2N box£59
BG-ED3 box£39
BG-E5 box£49
BG-E6 box£119
BG-E7 box£99
BG-E8 box£79
BG-E11 M- box...£189
BG-E16 box£169
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M- box£499
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G11 compact box...£179
G10 compact box...£149
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EOS 3£149
EOS 1n body£129
EOS 3 body£129
EOS 5 body£39
EOS 650 body£29
EOS 600 body£20
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10-22 F3.5/4.5 U£349
16-35 F2.8 LII box...£899
17-40 F4 L box£449
17-55 F2.8 IS U£449
18-55 F3.5/5.6 IS EFS.....£79

18-55 F3.5/5.6 IS STM.....£99
18-55 F3.5/5.6 EFS£59
24 F2.8 IS USM£369
24-70 F2.8 LII M- box...£1199
24-70 F2.8£699
24-105 F4 L£499
28-90 F3.5/5.6£79
35-70 F3.5/4.5£69
40 F2.8 STM£99
50 F1.4 U box£219
50 F1.8 MKI£149
50 F2.5 mac box£149
60 F2.8 EFS mac£249
65 F2.8 MPE M- box...£749
70-200 F4 IS U L£699
70-200 F4 U L£399
70-300 F4/5.6 L IS U...£779
70-300 F4/5.6 IS U...£279
75-300 F4/5.6 MKIII...£89
85 F1.2 L MKII M-£1279
85 F1.2 L MKI M-£949
85 F1.8 U box£219
90-300 F4/5.6£69
100 F2.8 IS L U£549
100-400 F4.5/5.6
L IS U£699/799
135 F2 M- box£639
24 F2.8 LII U£449
300 F2.8 IS L U MKI...£2999
300 F4 IS USM box...£699
400 F2.8 L IS U£3999/4499
400 F5.6 L box£749
500 F4 L IS U£4499
500 F4 L IS U£3999
1.4x extender MKII...£219
2x extender MKII£219
Kenko 1.5x conv£59
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Kenko Pro 300 DG 2x...£99
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BP-50£20
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PB-E2 drive£99
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10-20 F4/5.6 HSM box...£229
17-70 F2.8/4 DC OS HSM£239
17-70 F2.8/4.5 DC£149
18-35 F1.8 DC M-£499
18-50 F2.8/4.5 DC OS...£149
18-50 F3.5/5.6 DC box...£49
24-70 F2.8 HSM£469
24-70 F2.8 EX DG mac...£349
50 F1.4 DG Art M- box£549
50 F1.4 EX DC£249
70-200 F2.8 DG OS£599
70-200 F2.8 EX DG HSM £429
100-300 F4 EX DG box£449
120-300 F2.8 EX DG
OS box£1349
120-400 F4/5.6 DG OS £499
150 F2.8 EX DG£399
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TAM 70-200 F2.8 Di
VC USD£649
TAM 90 F2.8 VC box...£299
TAM 150-600 Di VC M-£699
TAM 180 F3.5 Di£369
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SB-E2 bracket£119
ST-E3 box£199
ST-E2 transmitter£89
ML3 non digital£69
430EX II£149
430EZ non digital£39
550EX£149
580EX box£239
580EX II£299
600EX RT box£349
CANON MF FD USED
F1N AE + AE
motor drive£499
F1N AE body£399
A1 body£79

T90 body box£149
T90 body£69
28 F2.8 FD£49
35-70 F3.5/4.5 FD£59
50 F1.4 FD£99
50 F1.8 FD£39
70-210 F4 FD£69
135 F3.5 BL£39
300 F4 FD£199
2X B Extender£69
TOK 60-300 F4/5.6£69
VIV 28-105 F2.8/3.8 Ser I £89
WLF fits F1 early£79
Winder A£199
Angle finder B£49
PB-E1 power booster...£69
AE Motordrive FN£179

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300TL£39
299T£49

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50 F1.4 AE£199

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X-Pro 1 body box...£299
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16-50 F3.5/5.6 XC M-...£179
18 F2 M- box£199
18-55 F2.8/4£279
18-135 F3.5/5.6£479
27 F2.8 XF M- box£199
35 F1.4 R M- box£299
55-200 F3.5/4.8 M- box...£399
56 F1.2 R XF M- box...£599
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X10 black box£179
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90 F4 M-£249
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+ 80 F2.8£1599
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PME prism box£149
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NC1 prism£69
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Sekonic L358£169
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Polaroid back£29

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150 F3.5 N£79
210 F4 N M£79
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Vivitar 2x converter...£39
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C330 F Body + WLF...£149
55 F4.5£199
65 F3.5 box late£199
65 F3.5 serviced£149
80 F2.8 late serviced..£139
180 F4.5£149
250 F4.5 late serviced £249
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Parameter£49
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50 F4.5 L + VF£699
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210 F8 + VF box M-...£499
Panoramic kit£49

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Pro SD + 127 KL
+ RFH + WLF£549
Pro SD comp M-£649
Pro S body£149
Pro S body scruffy£99
WLF£79
120 645V back£99
90 F3.5 KL£249
127 F3.5 KL£299
180 F4.5 C£99
250 F4.5 KL M- box...£249
Ext tube 2£49

MAMIYA RB 6x7 USED
RZ Pro body£149
RZ Proll + 90 + WLF
+ 120 RFH£499
120 RFH Pro II£99
120 RFH Pro I£49
Polaroid back£69
WLF£79
FE701 prism£179
AE prism early£79
Winder II£69
50 F4.5 W£199/299
65 F4 box M-£399
90 F3.5 W M- box...£299
127 F3.5 box£299
180 F4.5 W box£199
360 F6£149
No 2 ext tube£49
Pro shade£49
MINOLTA/SONY DIGITAL USED
Sony A100 body£89
Sony VGB30AM£79
Sony VGC70AM£139
Sony HVL56AM flash...£189
Sony HX90X M- box...£269

SONY NEX USED
NEX 7 body box£349
NEX 5N + 18-55£239
NEX 5 body£179
MINOLTA/SONY AF USED
Dynax 9 body£249/349
9000 body£79
800Si QD M£79
700Si + VC700£69
700Si body£49
7xi body£49
Dynax 5 body£39
505Si Super£25
300Si or SPXi body ea...£19
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20-35 F3.5/4.5 M- box£249
24-50 F4£149
24-105 F3.5/4.5 AFD box£179
28 F2.8£99
28-80 F4/5.6£39
28-85 F3.5/4.5£129
28-100 F3.5/5.6 D£49
35-70 F4£39
35-70 F3.5/4.5£25
35-80 F4/5.6£25
35-105 F3.5/4.5£99
50 F1.4 AF£149
50 F1.7£79
50 F2.8 macro£179
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85 F1.4 G box£599
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16-35 F2.8 ZASSM box...£979
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28-300 F3.5/6.3 mac...£149
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50 F2.8 EX DG mac...£149
55-200 F4/5.6£69
70 F2.8 DG Mac£199
70-300 F4/5.6 DG OS...£189
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1.4x EX DG conv£149
TAM 18-250 F3.5/6.3 Dili £179
TAM 60 F2.8 mac£239
TAM 70-200 F2.8 Di...£499
TAM 70-300 F4/5.6 Di...£89
TAM 150-600 VC£799
X700 body black£69
Teleplus 1.4x conv£69
Teleplus 2x conv£79
Kenko 1.4x Pro 300DG£149
Min 3600HSD£39
Min 5400HS£69
Min 5600HSD M-£99
Min 1200 Ringflash...£49

MINOLTA MD USED
X700 body black£69
X300 body chrome£49
X300S body black£49
XGM body chrome£49
28 F3.5 MD£39
28-70 F3.8/4.8 MD£39
35-70 F3.5 MD£49
35-135 F3.5/4.5 MD£49
50 F1.7 MD£39
70-210 F4 MD£79
75-200 F4.5 MD£45
70-300 F4.5/5.6 MD£69
TOK SL 400 F5.6 box...£129
Minolta auto
bellows 1 + 100£149

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D3s body£2399
D3X body box £1999/2199
D800 body box£1399
D700 body box...£649/799
D610 body box£699
D300s body£349
D300 body box...£249/299
D5100 body£249
D5000 body£199
D3200 body M-£179
D3100 body£149
D90 body£199
D80 body£149
MBD-11£119
MBD-12 M- box£219
MBD-80£49
MBD-200£49
Coolpix P7800 box...£249
NIKON AF USED
F5 body£349
F4 body£349
F4E body£299
F4S body scruffy£199
F801 body£29/59
F601 body£29
10.5 F2.8 EX Fisheye...£399
12-24 F4 DX£499
16-85 F3.5/5.6 AFS VR...£299
17-55 F2.8 AFS DX£449
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VR II M- box£399
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24 F2.8 AFD£299
24 F3.5 PC ED M-£1149
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24-70 F2.8 AFS box...£999
24-85 F3.5/4.5 AFG£199
24-120 F3.5/5.6 VR£299
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35-70 F3.3/4.5 AF£49
40 F2.8 AFS DX M- box...£149
50 F1.4 AFD£179
50 F1.8 AFD box£79
60 F2.8 AFD£249
70-200 F2.8 AFS VR II...£749
80-200 F2.8 AFD N£599
80-200 F2.8 early£249
80-400 F4.5/5.6 VR£599
85 F3.5 AFS VR DX£249
105 F2.8 VR£479
105 F2.8 AFD M-£399
200 F2 AFS VR II£2399
200-400 F4 AFS
VR II M- box£4299
300 F2.8 AFS VR II
Mint box£3499
300 F2.8 AFS VR II£2799
300 F4 AFS M- box...£699
300 F4 AFS box£649
TC17EII M- box£229
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Kenko MC7£69

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EX DG HSM£489
12-24 F4.5/5.6 EX
DG HSM£399
15 F2.8 EX£299
15-30 F3.5/4.5 EX DG...£199
18-50 F2.8 EX DC Mac...£199
18-200 F3.5/6.3 DC box£139
50 F1.4 DG Mint£199/239
50 F2.8 EX DG£139
50 F2.8 EX£119
50-500 F4/6. DG OS...£649
70-300 F4/5.6 macro DG...£99
100-300 F4 EX DG£449
120-400 F4/5.6 DG OS£499
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70-300 F4.5/6 Di VC USD£239
90 F2.8 Di box£249/299
90 F2.8£199
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USD M-£699
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ATX Pro£349
TOK 12-28 F4 ATX
DX box£399
TOK 16-50 F2.8 A
TX Pro£349
TOK 80-400 F4.5/5.6
ATX£249
ZEISS 21 F2.8
ZFII M- box£999
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SB-24£49
SB-25£49
SB-28£69
SB-80DX£79
SB-900£269
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DR-6 angle finder...£149
DR-3 angle finder...£69
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MB-23 (fits F4)£79
MC-30 remote£39
MF-23 (date back F4)...£79

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F3HP body£199
F3 body£149
FE-2 body blk£249
FE-2 body chr£179
FM2n body chr£179
FM2n body blk ...£199/299
FM body blk£79
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18 F4 AI£299
24 F2 AIS£339
28 F3.5 AI£99
28-85 F3.5/4.5 AIS£199
35 F2.8 AI£99
35-105 F3.5/4.5 AIS£99
43-86 F3.5 AI£49
45-200 F4/5.6 box...£199
50 F1.4 AIS£199
50 F1.8 AIS£89

50 F1.8 AIS pancake...£139
50 F1.8 E£59
55 F3.5 AI£89
85 F2 AI£149
135 F2 AI scruffy£299
180 F2.8 AIS ED£399
180 F2.8 AIS ED
scruffy£199
200 F4 AIS macro£279
200 F4 AIS£149
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14-45 F3.5/5.6£89
14-50 F3.8/5.6£199
14-54 F2.8/3.5£179
35 F3.5£99
40-150 F3.5/4.5£49
40-150 F4/5.6£49
50 F2 macro£349
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FL-36 flash£99

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OMD E-M5 body box...£379
OMD-EM10 body£329
Pen E-PL5 + 14-42...£POA
Pen E-PM1 + 14-42 M-£149
Pen E-PM1 body£99
Pen E-P3 body£POA
12-40 F2.8 Pro box...£599
17 F2.8£129
45 F1.8£149
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Pen VF2 viewfinder...£129
HLD-7 grip M-£129
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OM-4 Ti body blk£249
OM-1N body chr£129
OM-1 body chrome£129
OM-2SP body£99/239
OM-2N body chrome...£169
OM-2n body black...£149
OM-2 chr body£129
OM2000 body£99
OM30 body£49
OM-10 body chrome...£49
OM-40P body£49
24 F2.8£169
28 F2.8£59
28 F3.5£34
28-48 F4£99
35-70 F3.5/4.5£79
35-70 F4£79
35-105 F3.5/4.5£79
50 F1.4£99
50 F1.8£29
50 F3.5 macro£89
135 F2.8£99
135 F3.5£39
300 F4.5£199
T32 flash£29
Auto ext tube 14£29
Man ext tube 7/25 ea...£15

PANASONIC DIGITAL USED
G6 body£299
G3 body£129
GX1 body sil/blk box...£149
GF2 body£79
GF1 body silver£79
14 F2.5£169
14-42 F3.5/5.6£79
14-45 F3.5/5.6£149
14-140 F4/5.6 M- box £299
25 F1.4 M- box£349
45 F2.8 mac M-£449
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A>	AURORA HONEYCOMB FOR SPILL KILL.....	EC £15
	AURORA LBD912 90X120CM SILVER RECTANGULAR FLAT FRONT SOFTBOX.....	EC £99
	AURORA LBO150 150CM SILVER OCTO SOFTBOX.....	EC £145
	AURORA MULTIBLITZ PROFILUX 600W STUDIO LIGHT.....	EC £250
	AURORA SPILL KILL REFLECTOR.....	EC £15
	AUTO BELLOWS FOR OLYMPUS OM (COMMISSION SALE).....	E+ L £70
B>	BENBO MEDIUM BALL HEAD.....	EL £32
	BILLINGHAM 335 (OLIVE).....	EC £200
	BOWENS 1675 100X80 SOFTBOX.....	ML £85

Bowens GM400 Gemini Twin Head Studio Lighting Kit

M L £375



BOWENS MONOLIGHT 400D STUDIO FLASH HEAD

	BRONICA 250MM F5.6 MC (ETR FIT).....	E+ L £75
	BRONICA 45-90MM F4/5.6 ZENZANON-PE.....	SAS L £35
	BRONICA 45MM F4 RF INC. VIEWFINDER.....	E+ L £358
	BRONICA 50MM F3.5 ZENZANON PS.....	EL £270
	BRONICA 80MM F2.8 S'SQA.....	EL £75
	BRONICA ETR 120 FILM BACK.....	GC £65
	BRONICA ETRS & 75MM F2.8.....	EC £22
	BRONICA ETRS & 75MM EII STANDARD KIT.....	EC £263
C>	CALUMET 60" SILVER/WHITE UMBRELLA.....	EL £287
	CALUMET HEAVY DUTY BACKGROUND SUPPORT.....	E+ L £32

	CANON 10-22MM F3.5/4.5 EFS USM.....	E++ L £95
	CANON 135MM F2 L USM.....	EC £295
	CANON 14MM F2.8 L USM II.....	E+ C £547
	CANON 16-35MM F2.8 L USM II.....	E++ C £1,125
	CANON 17-85MM F4/5.6 IS EFS USM.....	E++ & B L £797
	CANON 18-200MM F3.5-5.6 EF-S IS.....	E+ L £122
	CANON 22-55MM F4/5.6 USM.....	EC £307
	CANON 24-105MM F4 L IS USM.....	E+ L £100
	CANON 28-135MM F3.5-5.6 USM IS.....	E++ C £504
	CANON 28-300MM F3.5-5.6 L IS USM.....	GL £202
	CANON 28MM F1.8 USM.....	E+ & B L £1,275
	CANON 28MM F2.8 EF.....	E+ L £302
	CANON 300MM F4 L IS USM.....	E+ C £105
	CANON 35MM F1.4 L USM.....	E++ C £859
	CANON 50MM F1.4 USM.....	EC £738
	CANON 50MM F1.8 EF.....	E+ L £195
	CANON 50MM F1.8 EF II.....	E++ L £95
	CANON 50MM F2.5 EF MACRO.....	E+ C £69
	CANON 55-250MM F4/5.6 IS STM.....	ML £238
	CANON 60MM F2.8 MACRO USM EF-S.....	E++ L £135
	CANON 70-200MM F2.8 L USM.....	E+ C £265
	CANON 70-200MM F2.8 L IS EF II USM.....	MC £787
	CANON 70-200MM F4 L IS USM.....	MC £1,288
	CANON 70-210MM F4 FD.....	E++ L £667
	CANON 85MM F1.2 L USM II.....	EC £25
	CANON 85MM F1.8 USM.....	ML £1,100
	CANON BG-E13 BATTERY GRIP.....	EC £204
	CANON BG-E2N BATTERY GRIP (EOS 40D).....	M & B L £98
	CANON BG-E6 BATTERY GRIP.....	E+ & B L £45
	CANON CP-E3 BATTERY PACK.....	E+ & B L £82
	CANON EOS 1000D & 18-55MM IS.....	EC £81
	CANON EOS 30D BODY.....	E+ C £142
	CANON EOS 33 & 28-90MM EF.....	GL £92
	CANON EOS 5D MARK II BODY.....	EL £65
	CANON EOS 5D MARK III BODY.....	E & B C £826
	CANON EOS 5D MARK III BODY.....	E+ C £1,685
	CANON EOS 5D MARK III BODY.....	E+ & B L £1,665
	CANON EOS 700 & 35-80MM.....	EC £34
	CANON EXTENDER EF 1.4X II.....	E++ L £217
	CANON EXTENDER EF 2X III.....	M & B L £242
	CANON GP-E2 GPS RECEIVER.....	E+ L £27
	CANON POWERSHOT G15.....	EC £161
	CANON POWERSHOT G1X.....	EC £194
	CANON POWERSHOT G1X.....	EC £299
	CANON RS-80N3 REMOTE SWITCH.....	E+ L £27
	CANON TC-80N3 TIMER REMOTE.....	E+ L £75
	COBRA AUTO 150S SLAVE FLASH.....	EL £15
	CONTAX 28MM F2.8 C. ZEISS T* BIOGON (G1/2).....	E+ C £299
	CONTAX 45MM F2.8 C. ZEISS TESSAR T* AE.....	E++ L £165
	COSINA 70-210MM MC (PENTAX K).....	GL £17
F>	FUJIFILM 14MM F2.8 XF.....	E+ & B L £442
	FUJIFILM 18MM F2.8 XF.....	M & B L £242
	FUJIFILM 35MM F1.4 XF.....	E+ C £247
	FUJIFILM X100 KIT.....	E+ C £317
	FUJIFILM X-E1 & 18-55MM F2.8/4 XF.....	E++ & B L £428
	FUJIFILM X-E2 BODY.....	E+ L £395
	FUJIFILM X-PRO1 BODY.....	E+ C £290
G>	GLIDETRACK HYBRID HD SLIDER.....	E++ L £215
	GOPRO HERO 3+ BLACK.....	E++ L £198

Hasselblad 120mm F4 C. Zeiss T* Macro-Planar CFI

E++ L £995



H>	HASSELBLAD 150MM F4 SONNAR C T*.....	EL £203
	HASSELBLAD 150MM F4 T* C. ZEISS SONNAR CF.....	E+ C £255
	HASSELBLAD 250MM F5.6 T* C. ZEISS SONNAR CF.....	E+ L £325
	HASSELBLAD 32E EXTENSION TUBE.....	EC £40
	HASSELBLAD 50MM F4 C. ZEISS T* DISTAGON CFI FLE.....	E++ L £995
	HASSELBLAD 50MM F4 DISTAGON C T*.....	EL £256
	HASSELBLAD 90MM F4 XPN.....	ML £295
	HASSELBLAD A12 FILM MAGAZINE.....	EL £56
	HASSELBLAD EXTENSION TUBE 21.....	EL £35
	HASSELBLAD EXTENSION TUBES 10.....	EC £15
	HASSELBLAD PISTOL GRIP.....	E+ L £50
	HASSELBLAD PM45 PRISM FINDER.....	E++ L £210
	HASSELBLAD POLAROID BACK.....	E+ C £65
	HASSELBLAD QUICK TRIPOD COUPLER (COMMISSION SALE).....	EL £30
	HASSELBLAD SERIES 60 LINER POLARISER FILTER (COMMISSION SALE).....	EL £50
	HASSELBLAD SERIES 60 RG-6654 IR FILTER (COMMISSION SALE).....	E & B L £25
	HASSELBLAD SWC FOCUS SCREEN ADAPTER (COMMISSION SALE).....	E+ L £150
	HOLGA 120SF.....	E++ & B L £22
	INDEPENDENT BATTERY GRIP (CANON EOS 550D, 600D ETC).....	E & B L £17
	JJC TM INTERVALOMETER.....	EC £22
	JOB O PRINT SQUEEGEE.....	EL £4
	KODAK EKTAPRO 3000 SLIDE PROJECTOR BODY (NO LENS).....	E & B L £75
	KODAK SAV CAROUSEL PROJECTOR.....	EC £72
	KODAK S-AV2000 SLIDE TRAY.....	EL £10
	LASTOLITE HILITE 5X7 FT COLLAPSIBLE BACKGROUND.....	SAS L £95
	LEICA 90MM F4 ELMAR-C.....	EL £196
	LEITZ 2X50 UNIVERSAL SLIDE MAGAZINE.....	EL £5

Leitz Pradovit CA2500 & 90mm F2.9 Colorplan Projector

M L £265



	LEITZ VARIO ELMARON-P 60-110MM F3.5 PROJECTOR LENS.....	ML £125
	LIGHTCRAFT WORKSHOP FADER ND II 77MM.....	E++ L £47
	LINHOFF TWIN SHANK PROFILE TRIPOD P.....	EL £197
	LOWEPRO CLASSIFIED 140AW.....	EL £35
	LOWEPRO S&F SPECIALIST 85AW.....	EL £48
	LOWEPRO TECHNICAL VEST LXL.....	ML £72
	LPL C6700 355MM COLOUR ENLARGER.....	E & B L £85

Mamiya RB67 ProS & 90mm Kit



E+ C £450

M>	MANFROTTO 056 3 WAY HEAD.....	EL £54
	MANFROTTO 303SPH MULTI ROW PANORAMIC HEAD.....	EC £275
	MANFROTTO 322RC2 GRIP HEAD.....	E++ L £83
	MANFROTTO 394 PLATE.....	E+ L £23
	MANFROTTO 410 GEARED HEAD.....	EL £72
	MANFROTTO 546BK/504HDV PRO VIDEO TRIPOD.....	E+ L £425
	MANFROTTO MH054M0-Q5 BALL HEAD.....	E+ L £95
	MEOPTA OPEMUS 6 COLOUR ENLARGER.....	EL £85
	MINOLTA 100-300MM F4.5-5.6 AF.....	EL £87
	MINOLTA 100-300MM F4.5/5.6 AF.....	EL £96
	MINOLTA 100-300MM F4.5/5.6 AF.....	EL £92
	MINOLTA 11-18MM F4.5/5.6 AF.....	E+ C £215
	MINOLTA 16 (COMMISSION SALE).....	EL £50
	MINOLTA 16 II SUBMINATURE SPY-CAMERA.....	E+ & B C £50
	MINOLTA 16 SUBMINATURE.....	EL £64
	MINOLTA 18-200MM F3.5-6.3 DT.....	E+ L £177
	MINOLTA 20MM F2.8 AF (COMMISSION SALE).....	EL £240
	MINOLTA 24-50MM F4 AF.....	EL £107
	MINOLTA DYNAX 5 & 28-100MM.....	EL £63
	NIKOMAT FTN & 50MM F1.4.....	GL £137
	NIKON 1 J1 & 10-30MM.....	E+ C £154
	NIKON 105MM F2.5 AI.....	EL £215
	NIKON 12-24MM F4G ED IF DX.....	E+ C £499
	NIKON 14-24MM F2.8G ED AFS N.....	ML £956
	NIKON 16-85MM F3.5-5.6 G ED DX VR.....	GC £250
P>	NIKON 17-55MM F2.8G ED DX.....	E++ L £495
	NIKON 17-55MM F2.8G ED DX AFS.....	E+ C £495
	NIKON 18-105MM F3.5/5.6G DX VR.....	EL £120
	NIKON 18-105MM F3.5/5.6G DX VR.....	E+ L £132
	NIKON 18-200MM F3.5/5.6G ED DX AFS VR.....	E+ & B L £200
	NIKON 18-70MM F3.5/4.5G ED DX.....	EC £135
	NIKON 18-70MM F3.5/4.5G ED DX.....	GL £96
	NIKON 200MM F2G ED AFS VR.....	ML £2,494
	NIKON 200MM F4 AIS.....	GL £76

KEY

LOCATION	
C:	Chelmsford
L:	London
CONDITION	
AN:	As New
M:	Mint

NOW
BUYING
TOP PRICES PAID

E++:	Excellent ++
E+:	Excellent +
E:	Excellent
G:	Good
SAS:	Sold As Seen
& B:	In Box

NIKON 24-70MM F2.8G ED AFS N.....	ML £905
NIKON 24MM F2.8 AI.....	EL £179
NIKON 24MM F2.8 D.....	E+ C £242
NIKON 28-50MM F3.5 AIS.....	E++ L £299
NIKON 28-85MM F3.5/4.5 AIS.....	ML £265
NIKON 28-85MM F3.5/4.5 AIS.....	E++ L £195
NIKON 28MM F2.8 AIS.....	E+ L £210
NIKON 28MM F2.8 D.....	M & B C £207
NIKON 28MM F3.5 H.C-AUTO (F MOUNT).....	EL £43
NIKON 35-70MM F3.3/4.5 AIS.....	EL £86
NIKON 35MM F1.4G AFS N.....	E++ L £1,025
NIKON 35MM F1.8G DX.....	E++ L £105
NIKON 36-72MM F3.5 SERIES E (AIS).....	EL £56
NIKON 50MM F1.2 AIS.....	EL £295
NIKON 50MM F1.4 D.....	EC £168
NIKON 50MM F1.8 D.....	EC £90
NIKON 55-200MM F4/5.6G ED DX VR.....	E+ C £99
NIKON 55-300MM F4.5/5.6G DX VR.....	E++ & B L £187
NIKON 55-300MM F4.5/5.6G DX VR.....	E++ C £185
NIKON 55MM F3.5 MICRO NIKKOR-P & M2 TUBE.....	GL £45
NIKON 60MM F2.8 D MICRO-NIKKOR.....	E++ C £215
NIKON 60MM F2.8G ED AFS MICRO.....	E++ L £297
NIKON 60MM F2.8G MICRO (COMMISSION SALE).....	M & B L £290
NIKON 70-200MM F2.8G ED AFS VR.....	E+ C £950
NIKON 7-15X35 ACTION BINOCULARS.....	M & B L £99
NIKON 85MM F1.8 D.....	E+ L £265
NIKON 85MM F2 AI.....	E+ L £205
NIKON D200 BODY.....	EC £135
NIKON D300 BODY.....	EL £246
NIKON D40 & 18-55MM G DX.....	GL £83
NIKON D5100 & 18-55MM VR.....	E++ & B C £253
NIKON D7000 BODY.....	E+ & B L £365
NIKON D7000 BODY.....	E+ & B L £355
NIKON D800 BODY.....	E++ & B C £1,245
NIKON D90 BODY.....	E+ L £202
NIKON D90 BODY.....	EL £142
NIKON F3 BODY.....	E+ L £185
NIKON F3 BODY & MD-4 MOTOR DRIVE.....	EC £205
NIKON F4S BODY.....	EL £167
NIKON FT1 MOUNT ADAPTER (NIKON 1).....	ML £142
NIKON MC-20 REMOTE CONTROL.....	EL £36
NIKON ML-3 REMOTE CONTROL SET.....	EL £152
NIKON PK-327MM EX. TUBE.....	E+ L £26
NIKON SB-16 SPEEDLIGHT.....	EL £42
NIKON SB-22 SPEEDLIGHT.....	EC £25
NIKON SB-600 SPEEDLIGHT.....	E+ C £127
NIKON TC-20 EII TELECONVERTER.....	E++ C £167
NIKON TC-20 EII TELECONVERTER.....	E+ C £164
NIKON WU-1B.....	E+ C £45
NIKORMAT EL & 50MM F1.4.....	E+ C £179
NOVOFLEX NEX/LEM MOUNT ADAPTER.....	E++ & B L £102
OLYMPUS 100-200MM F4 ZUIKO.....	EC £31
OLYMPUS 12MM F2 M. ZUIKO.....	E+ & B L £395
OLYMPUS 200MM F4 ZUIKO.....	E+ L £65
OLYMPUS 200MM F4 ZUIKO.....	E+ C £65
OLYMPUS 28MM F3.5 ZUIKO.....	E++ L £34
OLYMPUS 35MM F2.8 ZUIKO.....	E+ C £47
OLYMPUS 70-300MM F4/5.6 ED (4/3 FIT).....	E+ L £210
OLYMPUS 75-150MM F4 ZUIKO (OM FIT).....	EL £34
OLYMPUS ECG1 GRIP (EM10).....	M & B L £38
OLYMPUS HLD-7 GRIP.....	ML £92
OLYMPUS OM EXTENSION TUBE 14.....	E+ C £13
OLYMPUS OM EXTENSION TUBE 25.....	EC £13
OLYMPUS OM WINDER 2.....	EL £17

Olympus OM-2 Spot/Program & 50mm F1.8 Zuiko

E+ L £155



Olympus OM-D E-M1 12-40mm F2.8 Pro

M & B L £1,158



OLYMPUS OM-2 & 50MM F1.8.....	EL £132
OLYMPUS OM-2N BODY.....	E+ C £178
OLYMPUS OM-D E-M1 BODY.....	E+ L £495
OLYMPUS OM-D E-M5 BODY.....	EL £312
OLYMPUS PEN E-P3 BODY.....	E+ L £144
OLYMPUS PEN E-PL1 & 14-42MM.....	EC £76
OLYMPUS PEN E-PL1 BODY.....	E+ L £62
OLYMPUS PEN F 100MM F3.5 E. ZUIKO.....	E+ C £99
OLYMPUS POWER BOUNCE GRIP 2 SET.....	E++ & B L £42
OLYMPUS T32 FLASH.....	E+ L £31
OLYMPUS VF2 EVF.....	EC £92
PANASONIC 14-45MM F3.5/5.6 G VARIO.....	E+ C £100
PANASONIC 14MM F2.5 G II.....	E++ C £276
PANASONIC 45-200MM F4-5.6 LUMIX G VARIO.....	EL £167
PANASONIC 45MM F2.8 LEICA DG MACRO-ELMARIT.....	E++ L £395
PANASONIC BGGH3 GRIP (COMMISSION SALE).....	E & B L £99
PANASONIC GF3 & 14-42MM.....	E+ C £135
PANASONIC GF3 & 14-42MM G VARIO.....	EL £80
PANASONIC LUMIX GH3 & BATTERY GRIP.....	E+ C £517
PANASONIC LVF2 VIEWFINDER.....	E+ C £115

PANASONIC LX7.....	E++ & B C £218
PENTAX 135MM F3.5 SMC-M (COMMISSION SALE).....	M C £87
PENTAX 50-200MM F4/5.6 D-AL ED AF.....	E+ L £82
PENTAX 50MM F4 MACRO SMC-M.....	E+ L £112
PENTAX 55-300MM F4/5.6 SMC-DA.....	E++ L £195
PENTAX 645N OUTFIT.....	E+ C £949
PENTAX 70-210MM F4 SMC-A.....	EC £42
PENTAX 70MM F2.4 DA LIMITED.....	E & B L £286
PENTAX K1000 & 50MM F1.7.....	GL £123
PENTAX K2 & 50MM F1.7 (COMMISSION SALE).....	EL £137
PENTAX KM & 50MM F1.7 SMC-M (COMMISSION SALE).....	E+ L £148

PENTAX P30N & 28-80MM.....	E+ L £95
PHILIPS PVB100 TEST STRIP PRINTER.....	EL £22
POLAROID COOLCAM FLASH (COMMISSION SALE).....	E+ C £28
POLAROID LAND CAMERA J33.....	EC £200
PRAKTICA 80-200MM F4.5-5.6 PENTACON (BCA FIT).....	EL £10

PRAKTICA MTL5 & 50MM F1.8.....	E+ L £37
REFLECTA REPTIT 303.....	E & B L £50
RICOH GW1/GH1.....	E+ L £35
RODE SVM STEREO VIDEOMIC.....	E+ L £75
SAITECH 80-200MM F4.5-5.6 MC.....	EL £10
SAMYANG 8MM F3.5 CS II UMC (CANON EOS FIT).....	E+ C £176

SEIMAR 135MM F2.8 PRE-SET (M42 SCREW FIT).....	E+ L £22
SENNHEISER MKE400 MICROPHONE.....	ML £125
SEYMOUR SOLAR FILTER SF475.....	M & B L £50
SHEPHERD FLASH-METER (COMMISSION SALE).....	EL £50
SHEPHERD FM100 FLASH-METER.....	EL £43
SIGMA 10-20MM F3.5 DC EX HSM (CANON EFS FIT).....	E++ & B L £302

SIGMA 10-20MM F4/5.6 DC HSM (SONY/MINOLTA FIT).....	E+ C £200
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SIGMA 105MM F2.8 DG EX MACRO (CANON EF/EF-S FIT).....	EC £246
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SIGMA 150-500MM F5/6.3 APO DG HSM OS (NIKON AF FIT).....	E++ L £417
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SIGMA 150MM F2.8 APO DG HSM MACRO (CANON EOS FIT).....	E+ C £505
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SIGMA 17-70MM F2.8/4 DC CONTEMPORARY (CANON EOS FIT).....	E+ L £254
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SIGMA 24-60MM F2.8 EX DG (CANON EOS FIT).....	E++ & B L £246
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SIGMA 24-70MM F2.8 DG HSM (CANON EOS FIT).....	EL £387
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SIGMA 30MM F1.4 DC EX HSM (CANON EFS FIT).....	E+ L £186
SIGMA 30MM F1.4 DC HSM (NIKON AF FIT).....	EC £199

Sigma 50-500mm F4.5-6.3 DG APO OS HSM (Sony/Minolta Fit)

M & B L £735





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M6 Titanium + 35mm F1.4 + 50mm F1.4...E++ £4,499	10.5mm F2.8 G AF ED DX Fisheye	Mint- £369
M6 Titanium + 35mm F1.4.....E+ £3,499	16-35mm F4 G AFS ED VR.....E++ £659	
M6 Historica Edition.....Mint £3,799	16-85mm F3.5-5.6 G ED VR AFS DX.....E++ /	
M4P Anniversary Chrome + 50mm F2.....E++ £1,875	Mint- £299 - £329	
M7 0.72x Black Body Only.....E++ £1,199	17-55mm F2.8 G AFS DX IFED..E+ / Mint- £449 - £549	
M7 0.72x Chrome Body Only.....E++ £1,199 - £1,499	18mm F2.8 AFD.....E++ £649	
M6 0.72x Black Body + Winder M.....E- £749	18-55mm F3.5-5.6 G AFS VR.....E++ £79	
M5 Black Body Only.....E- £549	18-55mm F3.5-5.6 G II AFS DX.....E++ £69	
M4 Chrome Body + MR4 Meter.....Mint- £1,199	18-70mm F3.5-4.5 G AFS ED DX..E+ / E++ £79 - £109	
M4 Chrome Body Only.....E- £699	18-200mm F3.5-5.6 G AFS DX VRII.....E++ £319	
M3 Chrome Body Only.....E+ £499 - £549	20mm F2.8 AFD.....E+ / E++ £279 - £349	
M2 Chrome Body Only.....Exc / E+ £389 - £449	20-35mm F2.8 AFD.....Exc / E+ £299 - £449	
MD2 Black Body Only.....E- £249	24mm F1.4 G AFS ED.....Mint- £1,099	
MDA Chrome Body Only.....E- £249	24mm F2.8 AFD.....E++ £249	
Konica Hexar RF Limited Edition.....Mint £2,499	24-50mm F3.3-4.5 AF.....E- £79	
Konica Hexar RF + 50mm F2 + Flash.....E+ £799	24-50mm F3.3-4.5 AFN.....E- £99	
16/18/21mm F4 Tri Elmar + Finder.....E++ /	24-85mm F3.5-4.5 G ED VR.....Mint- £319	
Mint- £2,999 - £3,199	24-120mm F4 AFS G ED VR.....E++ / Mint- £599 - £639	
18mm F3.8 Asph M Black.....E++ £1,599	28-85mm F3.5-4.5 AF.....E- £69	
21mm F1.4 Asph M Black 6bit.....Mint- £3,699	28-300mm F3.5-5.6 G ED AFS VR.....E+ /	
21mm F2.8 Asph M Black.E++ / Mint- £1,549 - £1,649	Mint- £449 - £499	
21mm F2.8 Asph M Black 6bit.....E++ £1,599 - £1,699	35mm F1.8 G AFS DX.....E++ £109	
21mm F2.8 M Black.....E+ / E++ £989 - £1,199	35mm F2 AFD.....E++ £189 - £199	
21mm F3.4 R + 122228 M Mount.....Mint- £799	50mm F1.4 AFN.....E++ £129	
21mm F4 Chrome + Finder.....E+ £1,149	50MM F1.4 G AFS.....E++ / Mint- £199 - £219	
24mm F2.8 Asph M Black.....Exc / E++ £999 - £1,429	50mm F1.8 G AFS (Retro).....Mint- £169	
24mm F2.8 Asph M Black 6bit.....E++ /	60mm F2.8 AF Micro.....E- £219	
Mint- £1,489 - £1,599	60mm F2.8 AFD Micro.....E++ £249	
28/35/50 F4 Tri Elmar.....E++ £2,399	70-200mm F2.8 G AFS ED VRII.....E++ / Unused	
28mm F2 Asph M Black.....E+ £1,399	£1,249 - £1,389	
28mm F2 Asph M Black 6bit.....E+ £1,749	70-200mm F4 G VR ED.....E++ £749	
28mm F2.8 M Black.....E+ / E++ £749 - £799	70-210mm F4 AF.....E++ £179	
35mm F1.4 Asph M Black.....E+ / E++ £1,749 - £2,149	70-300mm F4-5.6 AFG.....E+ / E++ £59	
35mm F1.4 Asph M Black 6bit.....E+ /	70-300mm F4-5.6 ED AFD.....E+ £119	
Mint- £1,749 - £2,899	70-300mm F4-5.6 G AFS VR.....E++ / Mint- £279	
35mm F1.4 Black.....Exc £1,149	75-240mm F4.5-5.6 AFD.....E++ £89	
35mm F2 Asph M Black 6bit.....Mint- £1,549 - £1,599	80-200mm F2.8 ED AFS.....E- £449	
35mm F2 Asph M Chrome..E+ / Mint- £1,299 - £1,450	80-400mm F4.5-5.6 AFD VR.....E++ £489	
35mm F2 M Black.....E++ £1,099	85mm F1.4 AFD.....E+ / E++ £625 - £649	
35mm F2.5 M Black 6bit + Hood.....Mint- £949	85mm F1.8 AFD.....E+ / Mint- £199 - £239	
50mm F0.95 Asph M - Black.....Mint- £6,250 - £6,499	105mm F2 AF DC.....Mint- £549	
50mm F0.95 Asph M 6bit - Black.....E+ /	105mm F2.8 AFD Micro.....E- £329	
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Final Analysis

Roger Hicks considers...

'Bombay, India, 1981', by Alex Webb



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Either things work or they don't. This is an underlying truth of life, whether it be relationships, jobs, motor cars or pictures.

Sometimes the things that don't work can be fixed. Sometimes they can't. The best idea (indeed, often the only possibility) is to proceed on the basis that things are going to work or at worst are fixable. If they go too wrong, extricate yourself as best you can. Walk away if you have to. Relationships are perhaps the most familiar example: most of us have loved and lost (or been lost) at least once.

It is, however, surprising how few of us learn to apply this to photographs. We persistently overestimate some pictures because we have worked hard at taking them; because we really, really want them to work; and because we think that despite their faults, they ought to work. In short,

we fall in love with them. Others, we underestimate from the start, or a tiny seed of doubt soon grows into a thicket of disenchantment.

This is why it is a good idea to shoot first and ask questions later. The important question is, 'Does this work?' Whether the answer is yes or no, go on to ask *how* and *why*. By most camera club standards, this picture doesn't work. Look at the harsh light, the heads and shoulders of the two main characters, the chopped-off top of the child on the left. Faced with the same scene, many might decide not to take it. Even if they did, they might decide to bin it.

And yet, it does work. It begins with those huge eyes; you realise that they are both right eyes – an extra layer of surrealism. The Hindi writing suggests Bollywood and escapism, and the shadows are a clear escape from the sun. Such a

parallel may seem facile, but 'facile' isn't necessarily the same as 'wrong'. Often, we make connections we cannot immediately analyse; sometimes we have to trust our subconscious minds. At such times we should shoot, and then not be too quick to dismiss an image afterwards. We should ask why we took it, and why we like it.

Consciously or subconsciously, there is an Orientalist aspect to this picture: an admiration of the exotic, an acceptance of the idea that certain aspects of some cultures are so different to ours that we can only admire or denigrate them, but never understand them. Such a viewpoint may sometimes be valid, though not very often. In fact, I think that this picture is quite easy to analyse. At its heart it's an assertion of our common humanity. If it doesn't make you laugh, or at least smile, are you sure you're human?

AP

Roger Hicks has been writing about photography since 1981 and has published more than three dozen books on the subject, many in partnership with his wife Frances Schultz (visit his website at www.rogerandfrances.com). Every week in this column Roger deconstructs a classic or contemporary photograph. **Next week he considers an image by Donovan Wylie**



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